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HARRAP'S
DRAMATIC HISTORY
TEACHERS' HANDBOOK
—
F.E. MELTON

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Melton, Fred E.

Teachers' handbook
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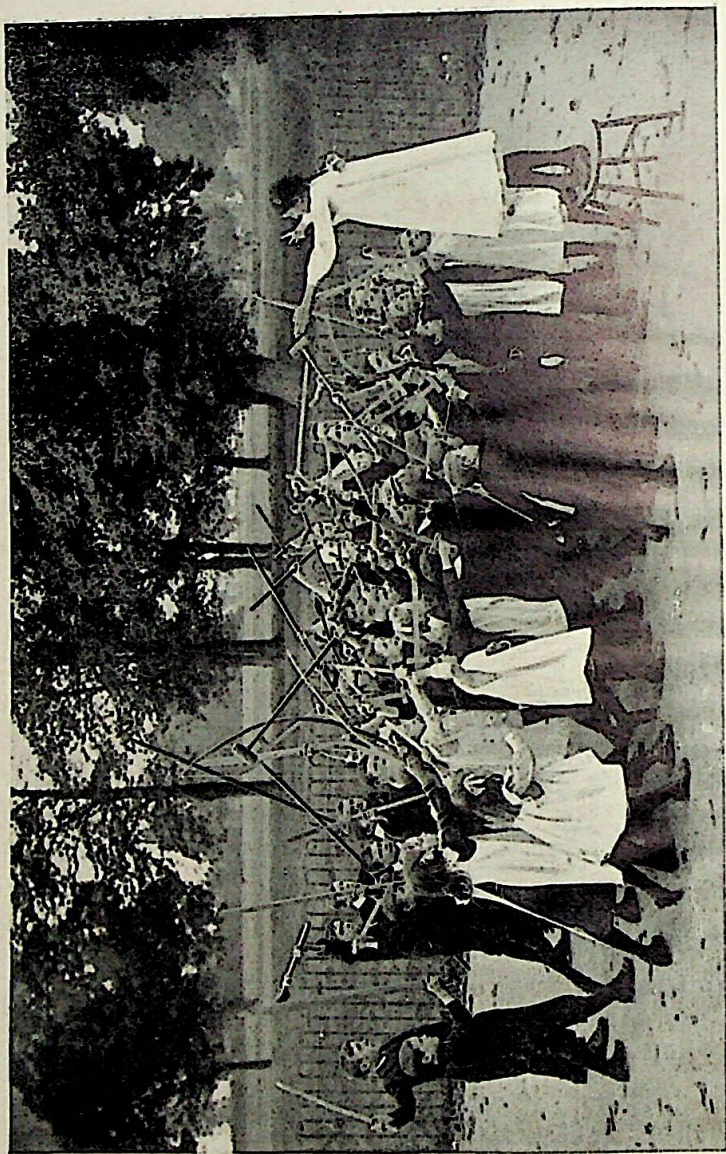
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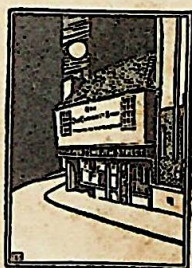
An uncostumed scene from "Wat Tyler"

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**TEACHERS' HANDBOOK
TO
HARRAP'S
DRAMATIC HISTORY**

**BY
FRED. E. MELTON**

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS PLANS ETC.



**LONDON
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PREFACE

It may be thought by some who read this scheme of history teaching that the dramatic idea was borrowed from Miss Finlay Johnson's admirable book, *The Dramatic Method of Teaching*. It is fair to that excellent teacher to say that I read her volume with the greatest pleasure and profit, but it is only just to myself to state that I first attempted the method in 1900 at New Park Road (L.C.C.) School, before Miss Johnson's book was published.

Since that time I have endeavoured to reduce a vague idea to a definite method, and because my experiments have been successful in my own school I venture to communicate my thoughts to my fellow-teachers.

I owe a great deal to many of Messrs Harrap's publications for portions of dialogue in the actual plays, to Colby's *Selections from the Sources of English History*, to a multitude of good historical novels, and to many volumes at present reposing on the shelves of the British Museum. I acknowledge my indebtedness willingly, for it is my belief that actual speeches made by historical personages are

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infinitely better in the mouths of our school-children than material composed more or less artificially.

To my recollection of a close and willing perusal of *Studies in the Teaching of History*, by M. W. Keatinge, M.A., also, I owe inspiration for several of the suggestions offered, although these are not given here just as they were written.

FRED. E. MELTON

History, at least in its state of ideal perfection, is a compound of poetry and philosophy. It impresses general truths on the mind by a vivid representation of particular characters and incidents.

To make the past present, to bring the distant near, to place us in the society of a great man or on the eminence which overlooks the field of a mighty battle, to invest with the reality of human flesh and blood beings whom we are too much inclined to consider as personified qualities in an allegory, to call up our ancestors before us with all their peculiarities of language, manners, and garb, to show us over their houses, to seat us at their tables, to rummage their old-fashioned wardrobes, to explain the uses of their ponderous furniture, these parts of the duty which properly belongs to the historian have been appropriated by the historical novelist. On the other hand, to extract the philosophy of history, to direct our judgment of events and men, to trace the connexion of causes and effects, and to draw from the occurrences of former times general lessons of moral and political wisdom, has become the business of a distinct class of writers.—LORD MACAULAY.



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TEACHERS' HANDBOOK TO HARRAP'S DRAMATIC HISTORY

CHAPTER I

A PLEA FOR HISTORY TEACHING AND THE PLACE OF DRAMATIZATION IN IT

IN these days of a lengthy curriculum, history, in many elementary schools, has been relegated to the background of a thirty to forty minutes' lesson once a week. In that lesson a certain portion of history, varying with the demands of the syllabus drawn up by the head-master, is taken by the assistants, and, though the teacher is trained to make the most of voice, gesture, coloured chalks, and other devices, yet it is found that ingenuity is taxed to breaking point to make the instruction interesting from week to week.

I well remember the method which was employed when I was a scholar groping blindly in the dense fog of historical detail, and seeking for something tangible which should throw much-needed light upon the doings and sayings of the world in which I found myself. Text-books were given out, and, one by one, we children each read aloud a para-

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graph from the chosen lesson. The reading exercise finished, the master enlarged upon the various points which struck him as important with such extra knowledge as he possessed, or invited us to ask questions upon details which we did not understand. To this day I can recall one question which I propounded to his great amazement: "Please, sir, why is it that my father goes to work and my mother stops at home? Why should not mother go to work and father stay at home occasionally?" The answer amazed me, for I was really seeking for knowledge which appeared to my young mind to be relevant: "Whatever has that got to do with history?"—a reply which was followed up by a lecture upon the value of always sticking to the point in question. Still I suppose we covered the ground in those days—there is no doubt that we worked right through the book—but history never became a popular subject. And, moreover, such facts as we gleaned were coloured by the text book-writer's and the teacher's points of view. Charles the First was either an unhappy gentleman most harshly treated by rebellious and ungrateful subjects, or a scheming scoundrel seeking to convert his long-suffering people into servile slaves. Henry the Eighth was a bluff, hearty individual, or an irreligious, perfidious Bluebeard. Reason we could not; deductions were never considered. Week by

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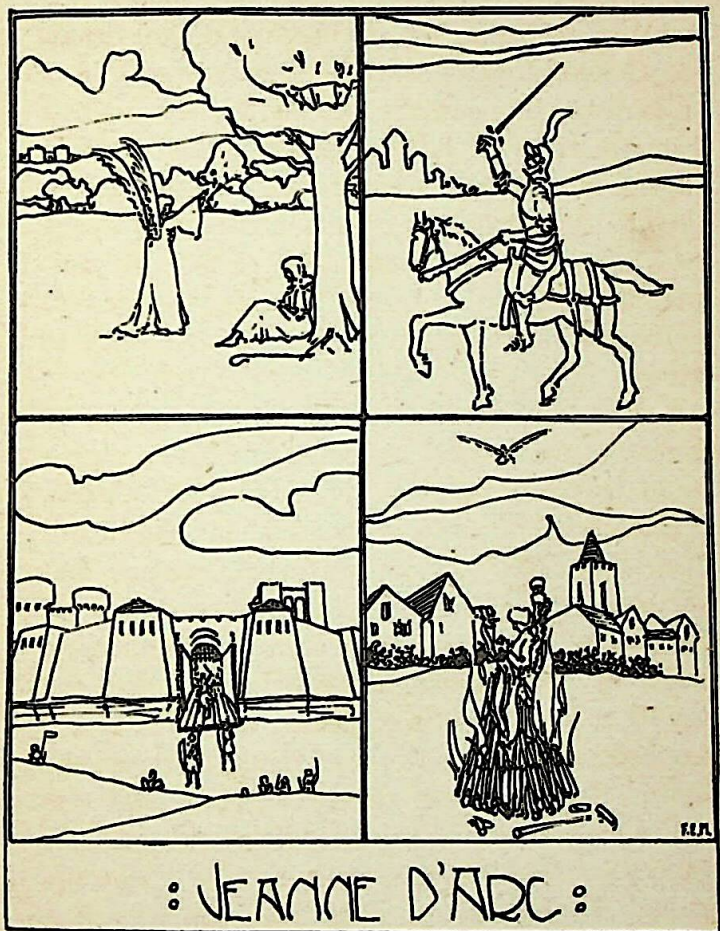
week the lessons were the same—reading exercise, lecture and explanation—and I firmly believe that both teacher and scholars reached the last moment of the lesson with the inward thought, "Thank goodness, that's over!" Happily there is but little of this at the present time. Text-books are beyond reproach; teachers recognize that history, to be effective history, must be unbiased and built up on solid fact, while the collective life of the people is a more important consideration than the study of incidents connected with a certain monarch's reign.

Securing Interest. However, somehow the history lesson still lags, and there is great scope for the teacher's ingenuity. Sometimes a battle has to be traced, and an opportunity is afforded for effective illustration; plans are prepared, and the sections of armies—cavalry and infantry—pursue one another most realistically upon the blackboard battle-field; the cleverly told narrative is followed by the class with almost breathless interest. Children spring up here and there to offer advice upon which unit of the British forces should be next advanced to overwhelm the enemy, or contemptuously express their disdain for some blunder on the part of the opposing general. They seize upon openings, and discuss the merits or demerits of a campaign with infinite zest, and, oftentimes, with deep sagacity.

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And they are happy, for are they not dealing death-wounds and ultimate defeat to their country's foes? Or perhaps the outlines of the life of a great character have to be considered. Here again is ample scope for the teacher's skill. Rough sketches serve to show striking incidents in the career of the hero; anecdotes and mannerisms clothe the character and present a living, breathing personality to the inquisitive minds which it is our duty to satisfy.

A short time ago I was fortunate enough to be present at the gradual unfolding of a lesson on the life of Jeanne d'Arc given by the Rev. D. Elsdale, a gentleman of uncommon skill in blackboard illustration. The subject was commonplace and had been taken time and again with the class by the teacher, but never have I seen such enthusiasm shown by the children as they followed eagerly, step by step, the events connected with 'the Maid,' sketched with lightning-like rapidity upon the board. Each line was closely watched, and one could almost see the question quivering on expectant tongues: "What is this going to be?" and the gradual illumination spreading upon the interested faces as an angel floated down with the heaven-sent message to the girl who slept peacefully among her scattered sheep. They knew all about this! This was the dream of victory! And so the lesson



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ran its smooth and even course. Jeanne mounted her horse, drew her sword, and pointed to the threatening walls of Orleans. Ah! the gates were opening, and Jeanne was riding in triumph into the vanquished city. And now she was captured and brought to trial. There was the grim post to which she was soon to be tied. Now fire licked round the fragile form, and lo! her spirit mounted heavenward while the cruel flames climbed higher and higher about the lifeless, sagging body in their midst.

"Did you enjoy it?" I asked, when the lesson was over.

"Rather!" was the collective answer, "it was fine!"

Surely this was interest indeed when a whole class could say with such fervour that half an hour spent in school was 'fine.'

Some teachers may say: "But blackboard drawing is not a strong point with us." The value of illustration does not lie in the beauty of the sketches presented, but in the fact that the lines are there, however crude, and actually convey a definite meaning to the children's minds.

But next week comes a political matter as dry as the Sahara, and those children, seven days ago, keen, wakeful and intelligent, are now dull, lethargic, and stupid. Interest has fled. And so, week by week, the spirit of the class ebbs and flows, and, as

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a result, the term examination finds the children patchy in their information. The work is known, no doubt ; events and dates—skeletons of history's pathway—trip easily from the scholars' tongues ; but where lessons lacked interest bare bones are served up for the head-master's consumption, while in the lessons which breathed life and struggle the bones are clothed with living flesh.

Which events will be remembered when the child has become a citizen ? Which lessons will be stored to serve as bedrock for future argument when school is a thing of the past, and, as man or woman, the one-time scholar is brought face to face with others in the battle of life ?

Dates are splendid landmarks in history, but they form a very poor material from which to fashion a finished product of historical thought !

Thus, if history is to be taught successfully, some method must be found which will awaken interest even in the dreary spots of a teacher's syllabus ; a device which will call into activity the energies which children delight to use.

We who have been teaching all our days, from the time when we were pupil teachers, giving weekly criticism lessons, and offering more or less satisfactory aid to patient assistants, to the present day, when we are receiving similar help, know that the one thing which made our lessons 'go' was

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interest. We worked better and more happily when the youngsters were keen ; we grew fidgety, uncertain of temper, and disconnected when the children would not attend ; yet, through it all, in the background of our minds we knew that the whole business turned on interest or the lack of it. We worked hard enough, in all conscience. True, but the children wanted to be working hard as well, and, if they found they could not have a finger in the pie, they said in their perverse brains : " Very well ! there's nothing we can do, so we may as well have a ' lark.' "

And, after all—though I suppose I shall get into trouble for stating such a monstrous theory—there is but little harm done if once in a while they do have a ' lark.'

The Value of History. But a knowledge of history is too necessary for such a lesson to become a time for inattention, and the dry portions must be made interesting somehow or other. History is valuable ; nay, history is invaluable. It is more than a ' cram ' subject, despite the opinion expressed by a great university teacher that boys should learn no history at school, but should reserve the study for the university, or, if the subject must be taught, that it should contain no more than the bare consideration of isolated facts and dates. How many of our children will go to a university ? Yet

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most of them will have a vote and a voice in the government of the country. What splendid use they will make of their ballot-papers if they are ignorant of the struggles of the past from which has come their heritage of freedom in the present ! History must be taught, and taught intelligently, to the poor as well as to the rich, for only thus can the rights of man—and woman—be properly grasped.

Such a fact has been recognized throughout the centuries by the foremost educationists—a statement which may well be illustrated by quotations such as the following :

An acquaintance with history is the most important element in a man's education, and is, as it were, the eye of his whole life.—COMENIUS.

The study of such a work [of history] under an intelligent teacher becomes indeed the key of knowledge and of wisdom.—DR ARNOLD.

And, if it is not presumption to place my thoughts in juxtaposition with the beliefs of such men, I cannot help feeling that history is the central subject of all instruction, for arithmetic, geography, grammar, science, and the other lessons of the classroom are closely intertwined with and dependent upon the development of historical detail.

Dramatization. So far I have endeavoured to show that there are two valuable methods which

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the teacher can call to his aid in history-presentation—blackboard illustration and vivid description—but that even these will fail where a particularly dry phase of the subject has to be considered. And they will fail, more or less quickly, in all lessons, for the illustrated lecture palls on children after a time.

V The student of tender age demands some opportunity of working for himself, and that demand will have to be satisfied, or even the most conscientious pupil will become inattentive. Reasoning powers must be exercised, deductions must be made. It is only the lazy children who desire to be fed with a spoon; the healthy type want to be doing for themselves, and such a desire is satisfied in dramatization. Illustrate, and you have vividness; describe, and you see the man; dramatize, and you have vividness and life together, while the child absorbs the actual personality of the character he portrays and the environment in which that character lived, moved, and had his being.

Let me make it quite clear that dramatization will fail if insisted upon continually. It is an aid, not a 'cure-all.' Illustrated lectures are splendid, but they are not eternally satisfying; deductive lessons are admirable, but they are not constantly useful; dramatization is good, but it must not be overdone. We must ring the changes upon the three methods, and not ride any one aid to death.

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If this be done, it becomes the teacher's hobby, not the children's delight, and familiarity, be it remembered, breeds contempt. Children do not always need pictures any more than they continually wish to be reasoning from the known to the unknown ; just as surely it is not good for them to be ever up and doing, slaying, declaiming, plotting, or marching, as they must be if dramatization is insisted upon at each lesson.

The Danger of Interest. Yet the dramatic method, when employed, has other advantages than the gaining of 'class interest.' Such a gain is a great deal, but it is not everything. Personally, I believe that too much is done to 'interest' children at the present time, and, as a direct consequence, they leave school and refuse to touch any form of employment which entails dull, uninteresting 'grind.' Stony patches cannot always be turned into grassy paths, hard 'grind' has to be done, memory exercises must be set, examination tests must be given, for only thus can character be successfully formed. If, as a result of the 'learning made easy' system of to-day, we are going to let loose upon the busy world young men and women who are not willing to take the rough with the smooth, the dreary routine with more attractive duties, blank failure will be the sole honest judgment upon our efforts. The wise teacher, in dealing with his embryo citizens,

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insists upon all the features of everyday life entering into the lessons of the school. The mental digestion must not be spoiled by constant luxury. Dry crusts have to be masticated patiently—cake is the reward for virtue.

I have found it a very good rule, after some dry-as-dust facts have been satisfactorily stored away in the recesses of the children's minds, to say: "We have been working hard and deserve a holiday. Let us have a change. Shall we try to make up a play on such and such an event, see what pictures we can draw dealing with so and so, or shall I tell you some stories about this, that, or the other?" Turn the matter the other way, however; teach by picture-lessons, tale-telling, and plays week in and week out, and then, suddenly, insist upon an exercise in memory, and the suggestion is immediately resented.

No better maxim can be inculcated into those young lives with which we come in contact than this: "Valuable knowledge cannot be obtained without effort." Lessons must be made interesting to a certain degree, but there must also be a definite return for the interest. Dramatization gives that return in many ways.

The Advantages of the Dramatic Method. Those who remember the Savoy comic opera *The Emerald Isle* will doubtless recall 'Blind Murphy's' lament

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when he found that his 'brogue' was in danger of destruction by the legislation of a new viceroy :

Of Viceroys tho' we've had a rather
 large assortment,
 There's never been
 One half so keen
As this one, on Deportment.
It is the ruling fad which marks his
 constitution,
 Deportment, and,
 You'll understand,
The art of Elocution.
And shall a man stand tamely by
And be of brogue bereft now,
Because a Lord Lieutenant's fad
Has made him education mad ?
Ireland, stand for your rights, and why ?
For your rights is all that's left now !

The most noticeable features of school life are the monotonous intonation and mumbling speech of the scholars, together with the slovenly postures they assume. It is the great exception, rather than the rule, to find clear speech and smart carriage. And these faults are difficult to eradicate, for many parents look upon the endeavour to make their children talk and walk properly as tending to inculcate conceit. However, it is our duty to correct these errors, particularly when we find the reading voice lifeless, full of provincial accent enriched with affectation, and the speaking voice, used in answering

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questions, indistinct and toneless. The whole atmosphere is artificial.

Get the youngsters into the playground, talk quietly to them on the way to school or home, and the natural voice comes to the surface, still accented, but now full of modulation, inflexion, and vigour.

Surely the natural voice should be present in school, and the value of speech, fluent, easy, and distinct, be one of the first points on which we insist. That children can read is good, but when they read at home or elsewhere than in school the scanning is silent. It is speech which counts in the busy world ; it is the voice which gives power and charm to individuality.

A speech full of point and sparkling with wit becomes trite and meaningless when badly delivered, whereas a clear and musical-speaking voice, coupled with a knowledge of elocution, has been, is, and will be a powerful factor in the success of many people, and we, as teachers, should strive first to become models of diction, and then to make our pupils at least colourable imitations of ourselves.

Not long ago I was present when a class of children unknown to me were busied with recitation. They came from quite poor homes, but their speech was extravagant, rich with affectation. In country districts this failing is prominent ; from what seed it springs I cannot say. I have found it one of my

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hardest tasks to make children enunciate such common words as 'my' and 'mine.' Instead of the open-mouthed sound, one constantly hears a word half-way between 'my' and 'may,' while 'mine' becomes almost 'main.'

Of course we all agree that such provincialisms as 'deskies' for 'desks' and 'cow'us' for 'cowhouse' should be destroyed, but very often in striving to correct such faults the children step over the other border-line and become afflicted with a drawl. Affectation is just as deplorable a fault as a provincial accent.

The dramatic method gives one the opportunity to introduce natural free speech in the school, and affords many chances of giving informal lessons in elocution. When a child is endeavouring to portray grief, anger, fear, or pleasure, the tone unconsciously alters, and such exercises react beneficially upon the reading lessons.

Gesture, too, is a subject well worth consideration. We insist upon drill, and point to its utility as a 'giver of health.' Gesture is informal drill, natural and unrestrained; and, just as free play is preferable to organized games, so free gesture is a greater delight to our scholars than the formal exercises. And, after a little practice, it is marvellous with what fidelity the children imitate actions suited to the words they speak. Though here it must be

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mentioned that gesture does not necessarily mean a movement of the limbs ; a muscle at work in the face is as much a gesture as the most violent motion of the body. All children are born actors. They imitate everybody. Little mannerisms, tricks of walking, hand motions, and facial peculiarities are copied faultlessly. If such a gift—and it is a gift, although sometimes its manifestation is unpleasant,—is natural, surely it can be directed into proper channels in the school. It is upon a child's natural capabilities we build, and no single natural capability should be allowed to run to waste. Even winks, sly nudges, and the making of faces convey a wealth of meaning to the children. Cannot we turn this wealth into a storehouse of riches from which to draw inside the class-room? No one will deny that action is a delight to the young. Let us act then; and, through the inborn gifts of the scholars, let us educate without the children being conscious of the fact that they are learning modulation, correct enunciation, and restraint of limb.

It is natural to fight. Therefore in the gymnasium we teach children to box, and impress upon them that coolness and skill are preferable to ill-temper and brute force.

It is natural for children to play. Therefore we teach them definite sports that they may learn that

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the individual must sacrifice selfish desires to the interests of a team.

It is natural for our pupils to talk and imitate. Therefore we should teach them to speak healthily—for elocution means health—plainly, and quietly, to move gracefully and freely, that by so doing it may be impressed upon them that speech conveys definite thoughts and actions, definite feelings more readily understood by others when correctly expressed. Point out that it is a waste of energy to shout or to mumble inaudibly when correct and quiet articulation will serve to better purpose; that it is a strain to gesticulate wildly when simple actions will mean as much or more to the onlooker.

Make Hamlet's advice to the players a real object of school-work, and boys and girls will thank us when, as men and women, they are fighting for existence in the battles of the world. A quotation from the *Further Reminiscences* of H. M. Hyndman will serve as illustration. When Mr Hyndman was chairman of the International Socialist Congress in London during 1896 there was present a Spanish delegate, by name Pablo Iglesias, and this man delivered a most impassioned address.

"What he said, translated by Lafargue," writes Mr Hyndman, "was excellent; but his way of saying it was so impressive that, although the audience did not understand a word of his language,

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he was interrupted by bursts of applause at several points in his address.

"I mention this here because we English are apt to underrate the value of appropriate gesture in public speaking ; and I never felt this more keenly than when I observed the extraordinary effect produced upon this crowded meeting by Iglesias."

But it may be objected that our scholars are not going to be actors and actresses, or even public speakers. Are they not ? Are we not acting every day of our lives ? Will they not be called upon to speak in defence or condemnation of the existing conditions which form their environment ?

"All the world's a stage," and we players of parts, controlling our feelings for the good of others, pretending interest when we feel none that we may make others happy, laughing when we feel more near to tears so that those for whom we care may not feel avoidable anxiety. Yes, we act ; and, by our actions, bring much happiness into a world which without such pretences would have more of sorrow and tears.

Character-formation. Again, if we make use of the drama for historical purposes, it is possible to exert a direct influence upon the characters of our pupils. Only by dramatic presentation can the children be brought into intimate relations with the great personages of history, and, by projecting

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themselves into the personalities of the people to be considered, feel as they felt, sacrifice as they sacrificed, live as they lived, and die, perchance, as they died. Undoubtedly it is most important that we, as teachers, should do our utmost to mould character, and make use of any subject which will help us to gain our goal, for many of the scholars get but indifferent training in their homes.

I agree with Dr Saleeby when he uses words to the effect that "it is more important for a girl to know how to make Henry Jones a good wife than to be aware of precisely the number of wives espoused by Henry Tudor." But it is possible that girls may learn the former lesson by studying the character of Catherine of Aragon.

However, there is a stumbling-block which must be surmounted before we decide to attempt to mould character upon the models set by historical individuals. It is rightly pointed out that history abounds in bad characters as well as good—indeed, the bad predominate—while it cannot be disputed that the villainous appeals more to many children than the moral; they memorize the tricks and expedients used by the crafty better than the sacrifices and steadfastness shown by the upright. Moreover, in the minds of young children there is no medium—a person is good or bad.

But the difficulty is not impossible to overcome.

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History teaching must pass through two stages, the first period being more or less idealistic, during which, as in the fairy stories, all the kings are good, queens beautiful, knights brave, and servitors models of fidelity—a period which will not lack ample examples in the story of our land ; the second stage critical, during which we shall discover, as in real life, the failings of some kings, the craft of some queens, the worldliness of many knights, and the greed, narrow-mindedness, and cruelty of great numbers of citizens. But the idealistic stage must not last too long nor the critical period remain in the background for too many years. History must be made into a real training-school for the mind, and criticism must be induced among the children.

Professor Keatinge, in his most helpful work upon history-teaching, gives a humorous account of a set of answers written by a child of fourteen attending a secondary school, answers which serve to show the danger of continuing the idealistic stage beyond its proper sphere :

In this case, as will be seen, the result of the history lesson has been to produce an unbounded optimism and belief in human nature.

"Hereward the Wake was a good ruler over a country. He was ruler over English people. He was born in the year 1076. He died in the year 1381."

"Thomas à Becket was quite a little boy when he became

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king. He was a good little king. He was born in the year 1080 and he died in the year 1400."

"Jack Cade was a good ruler and a good man. He was born in the year 1090 and he fought a great rebellion which was called Jack Cade's rebellion. He died in the year 1100 after many happy years."

"The effect of the history teaching received," writes Professor Keatinge, "would satisfy the most ardent advocate of direct moral instruction. . . . All the kings, queens, or other personages, whether they bear their own names or those of other people, whether they live for ten years or for two hundred years, are 'good' men and 'good' women; all the battles and documents are 'great.'"

There is no wrong in picturing Hereward the Wake as a national idol for the struggle he made against the Conqueror, but it is directly harmful to allow children to leave school believing that he was little less than a demi-god. Let them learn later in their schooldays that he was swayed by jealousy, petty spite, and lust—serious failings which marred his career—and the moral is more surely pointed that any great hero may still be spoiled by giving way to sin.¹

Let Thomas à Becket be shown as a "good little king"—among churchmen—but insist at a future

¹ Mr Douglas C. Stedman's *The Story of Hereward* gives a very sane and well-balanced picture of the hero.

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date that obstinacy and pride brought about his downfall.

Honour Jack Cade for his aspirations if you will, but this may be pernicious if it is not pointed out that his methods of obtaining redress led to further chaos.

Character can be moulded by a combination of the idealistic and critical methods, particularly if we insist on the point that ancient and mediæval history both abound in situations similar to the happenings of our own day ; that life was the same then as now although conditions of comfort were not so far advanced. There are duties to be done, dangers to be faced, sacrifices to be made, as in the days gone by, when life was more spectacular but less exacting than in the times in which we live.

Samuel Butler, the author of *Erewhon*, marked the value of such teaching when he wrote :

If a person would understand either the *Odyssey* or any other ancient work he must never look at the dead without seeing the living in them, nor at the living without thinking of the dead. We are too fond of seeing the ancients as one thing and the moderns as another.

And the dramatic method, by vividly suggesting to the minds of the children a noble part played by some stalwart of the past, some great action performed by an individual whose name had hitherto been but a name dimly connected with historical

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events, works powerfully upon the imagination, unformed and infinitely receptive, of the youngest scholars, and, bridging over the gulf of the years, sets their feet upon the moral road with faces turned valiantly dutyward.

The Cultivation of Imagination.

Childhood, we all know, is the age for dreaming, for decking out the world as yet unknown with the gay colours of imagination; for living a life of play or happy make-believe. —PROFESSOR SULLY, *Studies of Childhood*.

History plays, as presented in the class-room, of necessity must be crude, the dresses scanty, and the 'properties' rude in construction, yet to the child they are capable of bringing a rough realization of the living picture formed by the actors in the past events portrayed. This very crudity calls into being one of the strongest qualities which children possess—imagination. And the picture being, rough as it is, a show, brings the idea before the eyes of the scholars in a way which no amount of oral work alone can reproduce. The first natural impulse of play at any time is the desire to be something, to make believe, to act a part. The child personating King John, the children professing to be barons, don robes fashioned from shawls or overcoats, armour produced from cardboard and tin-foil, and immediately doff their everyday selves to become in imagination part and parcel of an interesting past.

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For, in realizing a part, children unconsciously transform their surroundings ; the tin-foil becomes chain-mail of proof, the sword of lath a weapon keen-edged and trusty as ever was forged in Milan.

So we, in childhood, transformed wooden chairs into gallant steeds, and nursery couches into wondrous carriages whereon we travelled far and wide over the narrow confines of the play-room floor, seeking and finding adventures with dragons and other fearsome monsters visualized from coal-scuttles and fireirons, creeping at last into the grateful shelter of a splendid pavilion whose roof and walls were represented by the table and its cloth.

And just as it is natural that a very young child when playing desires to tell others what are the fruits of this imagination, or, if companionless, will confide in such unpromising things as a wooden doll or a candlestick, so it follows that the imaginary King John will wish to unburden himself of what he believes to be kingly thoughts in regal language with a right royal air.

The assumption of dignity would be comical if it were not so evidently sincere, whilst the words would be trifling were they not the direct result of an effort to translate the language of every day into the pronouncements of a monarch, a definite groping in an unknown atmosphere for words suited to one who wears the kingly crown.

A PLEA FOR HISTORY TEACHING

I remember one child, posing as King Ethelbert, saying to Augustine when the monks outside were singing "Hallelujah" in a most doleful manner, more like the bleating of forsaken lambs than the triumphant chanting of early Christians: "I say, Augustine, ain't you got a tune better'n that?" Whereupon the offended saint retorted: "Here! kings don't talk that way." The result was obvious. Ethelbert pondered deeply for some time, and finally brought out the following gem of kingly courtesy: "Pardon me, saint, but if you would not mind, I must ask you to get those monks to sing more cheerfully."

Very crude, rough, and unseemly, without a doubt, but imagination was being exercised, and each child was working out his own part unaided, save for the outspoken criticism of his fellows.

The Avoidance of Self-consciousness. But there are two factors which must be taken into consideration before the imagination of the children can work without restraint—poverty of vocabulary and self-consciousness.

Girls, being by nature more sympathetic than boys, grasp readily the feelings of others and translate them into speech whilst the sterner sex are still searching for suitable words. But there is more than this to account for the comparative slowness of lads, particularly when they have passed into

HARRAP'S DRAMATIC HISTORY

the upper standards. Then they are beginning to feel their feet, and, above all, desire to give of their best, with the result that they fear their efforts may not reach the level maintained by others in the class.

It is the same feeling which attacks a man when he is suddenly requested to make a public speech. He desires to impress his hearers, and arranges his thoughts carefully, but suddenly he is struck with the dread that his words may not be adequate, and, when delivered, will subject him to ridicule rather than to the approbation of his hearers. As a direct consequence, his speech is hesitating and disconnected, and he is overtaken by the very evil he struggles to avoid.

Thus it is that at first one finds it better to select the more assertive children for the 'speaking parts,' leaving the highly strung, nervous type to provide a 'chorus.' And here let me insist that a 'thinking part,' as it is contemptuously termed, is more difficult to sustain satisfactorily than any other, and it must be remembered that the rendering of a play depends more for its success upon the efforts of those whose work is solely pantomimic than upon the mere delivery of the lines. The effect is altogether spoiled if the 'chorus' fail to make the onlookers understand how they are swayed by the arguments and expressions used by the principals.

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But, little by little, the nervous child is led to express himself at some length, having been invited, from time to time, to deliver a line, as he thinks it should be spoken, when one of the speakers has failed to make its meaning clear. Bit by bit self-consciousness departs, and each child is capable of speaking confidently and with a certain degree of fluency.

When Speech should be allowed. Meanwhile there is the danger of self-assertiveness creeping in to replace self-consciousness, but this can be avoided if a definite rule is made that no child may speak unless it is to utter something which is relevant, either as criticism or suggestion, to the material of the play. And so children can be taught never to talk or interfere unless their speeches or actions can expedite—not hinder—a rational understanding of the question under consideration. I know that an axiom of early etiquette runs, "Children must be seen and not heard," but it is my opinion that, far from the proverb being a golden rule, it is a pernicious doctrine. Rather should it be, "Children are not to be heard unless they have something reasonable to say."

Oftentimes scholars are sternly rebuked for speaking, when, if we could follow their reasoning, they should be applauded for ingenuity and thoughtfulness. The only time when a child deserves

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rebuke for ' chiming in ' is when he speaks without thought. And it must not be forgotten in this relation that sometimes by a lucky shot a correct conclusion is arrived at without mental effort having been expended. Such a speech is no more deserving of praise than one which voices a wrong conclusion attained by some faulty process of reasoning.

Nevertheless one constantly hears in the classroom the fatal expression, " You're wrong ! " being used to a child who has evidently been doing his best to reason the matter out, and the equally dangerous compliment, " Quite right ! " uttered to a pupil who has hazarded a guess which proved correct. If only each statement were followed by the helpful " Why ? " how often should we find that it is the child who sits disconsolate under unmerited rebuke who has been really working upon the lines of reason, while the other, who basks in the pleasant sunshine of the teacher's smile, is unable to explain a word of what he has answered !

It is equally wise to know when to keep silent and when to seize the right moment to speak.

In conclusion, it must be said that it is not history dramatization alone which can claim to reap the advantages briefly sketched above. Every lesson, correctly taught, has its effect upon the mental,

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moral, and physical well-being of the pupils. But I do claim that a wider detailed knowledge of history will aid our scholars to take a more intelligent view of every subject which appears upon our already overburdened time-table.

CHAPTER II

PREPARATION FOR DRAMATIZATION

BEFORE proceeding with any play it is necessary that the class should be fully conversant with the conditions of life prevailing at the selected period; that is to say, the children should be able to reproduce, more or less successfully, the correct atmosphere required for a proper realization of the dramatized event.

In order to do this, each child should keep a separate note-book and collect the results of his own observation and research. Such a book naturally lends itself to subdivision into four sections.

In the lower standards a preliminary lesson is given, during which the teacher briefly suggests the details which are most important, gradually building up on the blackboard a summary of salient points. Such blackboard schemes I have suggested in the prefaces to the plays in the earlier books of the Dramatic History course. When the next writing lesson occurs, after a recapitulation by question and answer, the summary is copied carefully into

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the note-book, to be roughly committed to memory as time allows.

The next step depends entirely upon the interest which each individual shows in gathering, during spare time at home or during optional lessons in school, information—either printed matter or pictorial—from readers, novels, magazines, book catalogues, daily papers, or the advertisement columns in various periodicals, dealing with the period to be studied. In a very short time a more or less acceptable store of illustrations is obtained by each child ; or, if any scholar has been unable to obtain suitable pictures, those who are more fortunate in the possession of material will be quite willing to share with others, so that each may show some definite result of research. A general survey and discussion follow, and the pictures are pasted on to the page or pages following the copied summary.

The succeeding drawing lesson affords an opportunity for the preparation of a set of free, self-expressional sketches in line or colour which serve as a test of what has been learned and observed from the written summary and the subsequent collection of pictures and information gathered from outside sources. Further, these form a nucleus around which a set of exercises in paper cutting and tearing, modelling in card and clay, and the making of

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objects from light wood can be arranged. When these free drawings are complete they are pasted in turn into the note-book, to be compared and contrasted with the finished, detailed pictures drawn by those artists whose knowledge of the period was, so to speak, exhaustive.

Now each pupil has a summary, a set of printed illustrations, and a page of drawings. The final step is at hand. From the information gleaned so far, the children should be able to write a thoughtful composition expressing conclusions at which they have arrived, embodied in the form of a generalization. This having been satisfactorily accomplished to the best of each child's ability, a sufficiency of facts should be at the general disposal to ensure that the dramatized event shall be followed with both interest and understanding. The knowledge gained must be applied: the pictures and drawings will have given an idea of the dresses, weapons, household effects, and the abodes of the people under consideration, while the summary and subsequent composition test supply an adequate amount of matter from which to select a few short spoken sentences for delivery in play form, accompanied by appropriate gestures.

The method of dealing with the play itself can be left to a later portion of the book, as it has been my present intention to deal solely with the pre-

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paration which must precede dramatization of any event.

So much for the lower standards. With elder children the blackboard summary should be superseded by a graphed copy of a contemporary document, whilst in the fourth stage the students would be required to exercise their critical faculties, collecting, as it were, the internal evidence from the document.

Contemporary Documents and their Treatment. Let us imagine for the sake of clearness that the death of Becket is to be dramatized. The best documentary evidence can be obtained from Grim's account in the *Vita S. Thomas*. Accordingly, suitable passages are graphed and a copy given to each child for insertion in the note-book :

They hastened, by bolting the doors of the church, to protect their shepherd from the slaughter. But the champion, turning to them, ordered the church doors to be opened, saying, "It is not meet to make a fortress of the house of prayer, the church of Christ ; though it be not shut up it is able to protect its own ; and we shall triumph over the enemy rather in suffering than in fighting, for we came to suffer, not to resist." And straightway they entered the house of peace and reconciliation with swords sacrilegiously drawn, causing horror to the beholders by their very looks and the clanging of their arms. . . .

Inspired by fury, the knights called out, "Where is Thomas Becket, traitor to the king and realm ?" As he answered not, they cried out the more furiously, 'Where is the Arch-

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bishop?" At this, intrepid and fearless, . . . he descended from the stair where he had been dragged by the monks in fear of the knights, and in a clear voice answered, "I am here, no traitor to the king, but a priest. Why do ye seek me?" . . . Having thus said he turned to the right under a pillar. . . . The murderers followed him; "Absolve," they cried, "and restore to communion those whom you have excommunicated, and restore their powers to those whom you have suspended." He answered: "There has been no satisfaction, and I will not absolve them." "Then you shall die," they cried, "and receive what you deserve." "I am ready," he replied, "to die for my Lord that in my blood the Church may obtain liberty and peace. But in the name of Almighty God, I forbid you to hurt my people whether clerk or lay." Thus, piously and thoughtfully, did the noble martyr provide that no one near him should be hurt. . . .

Then they laid sacrilegious hands on him, pulling and dragging him that they might kill him outside the church. . . . But when he could not be forced away . . . one of them pressed on him and . . . waved his sword over the sacred head . . . leapt upon him and wounded this lamb who was sacrificed to God, on the head; and by the same blow he wounded the arm of him who tells this. For he, when the others, both monks and clerks, fled, stuck close to the sainted archbishop and held him in his arms till the one he interposed was almost severed. . . .

At the third blow he fell on his knees . . . saying in a low voice, "For the name of Jesus and the protection of the Church I am ready to embrace death." Then the third knight inflicted a terrible wound as he lay, by which the sword was broken against the pavement.

At the conclusion of the research work questions such as the following would be given, and the

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answers entered on the sheet following the self-expressional drawings :

(a) Who was the writer of this document? What reasons have you for such a conclusion?

(b) What was the writer's opinion of Becket?

(c) What would you imagine Becket's character to be, (1) from the reading of this document, (2) from outside knowledge?

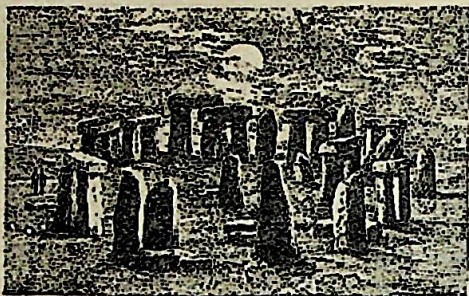
Below are given typical answers :

(a) Grim was the writer, because (1) he was a monk, and few people but monks could write; (2) he uses these words, "he wounded the arm of him who tells this. For he . . . stuck close to the sainted archbishop," and I know that Grim was the only monk who was hurt.

(b) Grim refers to Becket as "the champion," "the noble martyr," "the lamb who was sacrificed to God," "the sainted archbishop," and speaks of his "sacred head." Therefore I believe that Grim held his master in the highest respect, and thought he was a martyr and saint worthy to be ranked with the Saviour.

(c) I. From the document Becket was (1) bold and brave—for Grim says he was "intrepid and fearless"; (2) a firm upholder of the rights of the clergy—"I am ready to embrace death for the protection of the Church," "in my blood the Church may obtain liberty and peace"; (3) thoughtful for others—"I forbid you to hurt my people whether clerk or lay"; (4) determined—"I will not absolve them"; (5) very religious—"It is not meet to make a fortress of the house of prayer."

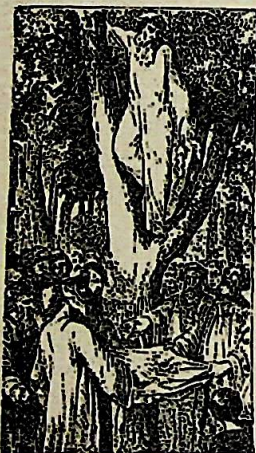
II. From other books I believe that Becket was kind to the poor, although in his early life he was proud and fond of good living.



From Nelson's Royal Readers ~



from McDougall's Book Catalogue



from Nelson's Royal Readers.....

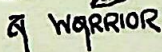
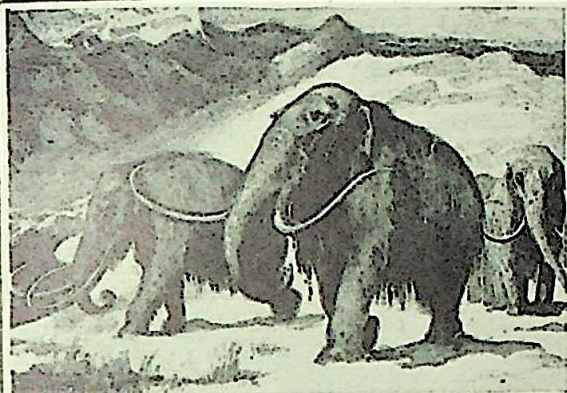


from McDougall's Book Catalogue



... Advertisement for Avon Tyres

Collection of Illustrations made by Standard III child



The Ancient Britons

Self expressional Drawings. Std. III



DRAMATIZATION

The following is a typical week's preparation in the lower standards and with older children respectively.

1. Taken from the note-book of Violet Burton, aged nine and a half years.

THE ANCIENT BRITONS

BLACKBOARD SUMMARY COPIED

As time went on the people learned new ideas.

Huts were better made.

Cloth robes were worn instead of skins.

Metals began to be used in the place of bone and stone.

The clans grew into tribes.

The tribes often fought against one another.

The prisoners taken in the battles became slaves.

The tribes were scattered over the country.

On the plains some tribes grew corn.

The forest tribes had great stores of skins.

In the west of Britain tin was found.

This tin was prepared with great skill.

Corn was exchanged for tin or skins.

This exchange was called 'barter.'

This was the beginn(g)ing¹ of trade.

COMPOSITION EXERCISE

The Ancient Britons were men who, at first, lived in the trees. There were no clean roads, like we have, it was all forest, no houses, nothing But trees, The wild animals used to go after the(m) people. When the Wild Animals did go after (go after) them they ran up trees just like we should run along a road. If the animals came up one tree they would swing on to another. For their boat they got the trunk of a tree and burnt out the middle and that served as their boat.

¹ The letters bracketed indicate errors in spelling.

HARRAP'S DRAMATIC HISTORY

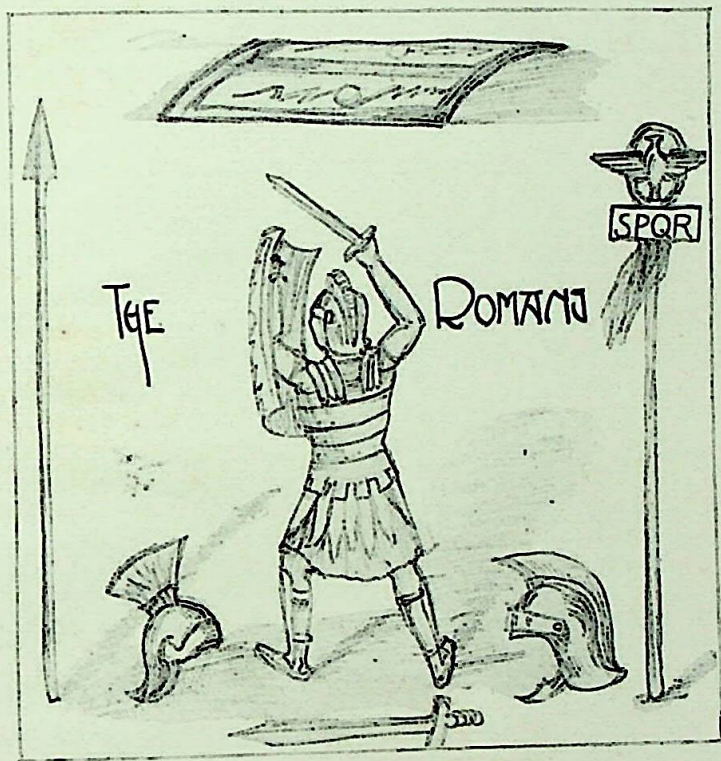
They caught fish with hooks made of bone and (a) killed animals with clubs made of wood. They killed the deer and the wild boars and the skins served as their clothes and the flesh as their food. They could not read or write because there were no schools then. Some of their boats were made with twigs and mud then covered with the skins of animals to keep out the water. They wore their hair long because there were no barbers. Then they began to live in caves then they made a fire to keep out the wild animals. They had no matches like we have to-day they rubbed two bits of stick together and then they came al(l)ight. The people broke branches from the trees to make fires. Then (T)they became more civilized and built huts made of sticks and mud. They left a little hole in the roof for the smoke to get out. Time passed on then the people(e) from other lands began to visit Britain. Some of them came from France which was then called Gaul. From these men the Britons lear(n)ed better ways, instead of skins, they began to wear dresses of wool. Some wore necklaces made of Gold, Silver, and bronze.

2. Taken from the note-book of Bertha Grace, aged thirteen years. The illustrations are from the note-book of Hugh Powell, aged thirteen years.

THE NORMAN PERIOD

GRAPHED DOCUMENT

This was a fatal day to England, a melancholy havoc of our dear country, through its change of masters. For it had long since adopted the manners of the Angles, which had been very various according to the times ; for in the first years of their arrival, they were barbarians in their look and manners, warlike in their usages, heathens in their rites ; but, after embracing the faith of Christ, by degrees and in



The Roman Period
Self expressional Drawings by H. Powell



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process of time, from the peace they enjoyed, regarding arms only in a secondary light, they gave their whole attention to religion. . . . The clergy, contented with a very slight degree of learning, could scarcely stammer out the words of the sacraments, and a person who understood grammar was an object of wonder and astonishment. The monks mocked the rule of their order by fine vestments, and the use of every kind of food. . . . Drinking in parties was a universal practice, in which occupation they passed entire nights as well as days. They consumed their whole substance in mean and despicable houses; unlike the Normans and French, who, in noble and splendid mansions, lived with frugality. . . . Moreover the Normans, that I may speak of them also, were at that time and are even now, proudly apparelled, delicate in their food but not excessive. They are a race inured to war, and can hardly live without it; fierce in rushing against the enemy; and where strength fails of success, ready to use stratagem or to corrupt by bribery.—WILLIAM OF MALMESBURY, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*.

CRITICISM EXERCISE

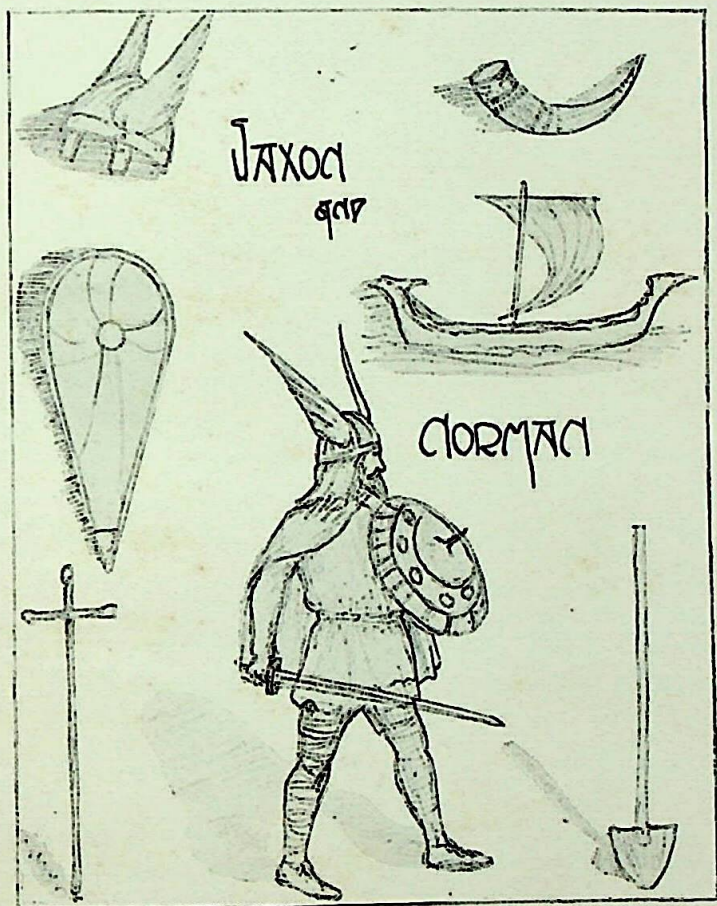
A. After reading through this document I have come to the conclusion that the Author is a Norman Priest because (1) he seems to favour the Normans and speak enviously of the Saxons (2) he knows a lot about religion and the Church and only a priest is likely to notice anything about the religion (3) Enemies(y's) never speak well of one another so that brings us to the settled conclusion that he was a Norman.

B. We can depend very little on his account of the Saxons because being enemies they are very fond of exaggerating and so it is hard to say how much of the description of them is true.

[The foregoing are examples of the danger of missing one important detail. The phrase "our dear country" was



Collection of Illustrations made by Standard VII child



Self expressional Drawings
By H. Powell

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*passed apparently without notice—if it had been observed it would have altered the judgment that the document was the work of a Norman. William of Malmesbury was a child of both races.]*¹

NORMANS

1. Very delicate in their food and ways.
2. They are also very religious and educated.

SAXONS

1. Gluttonous and drunkards and rough in appearance.
2. Next to heathens in their ways and barbar(i)ous in their looks.

The Saxons were a very warlike people and were always in search of adventure. They were splendid sailors and were also very heavy drinkers; when any great event took place they had a feast and of course got frightfully drunk.

[Needs more care. Cf. conclusion with a more careful reading of line 2—"our dear country."]¹

Blackboard Summaries. Occasionally blackboard summaries can be made very attractive if the puzzle element is introduced, and as a means of increasing the vocabulary the method deserves mention.

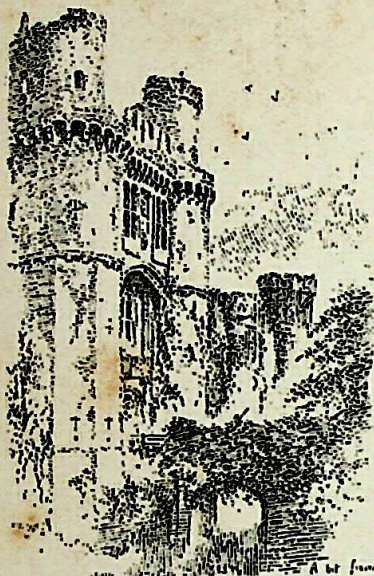
The children are requested to form a blackboard scheme dealing, let us say, with the Ancient Britons or William the Conqueror, each phrase or sentence of which must begin with the initial letter B or W, as the case may be. Instantly dictionaries are requisitioned, and all words likely to deal with the subject are tabulated to see if they will provide suitable beginnings, and, after a short time, summaries such as the following are submitted:

¹ Teacher's correction.

JAGADGURU VISHWANADHAR
SARASWATI
SIMHASAN JNANAMANDIR
LIBRARY

51

William the Conqueror



A bit from
Hurstmonceux
Castle



Coin
of
Norman
Period



Collection of Illustrations made by Standard VII child

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THE ANCIENT

BRITONS lived in Albion
ears and wild beasts terrified them
ut later they hunted and killed these animals
ones and stones were used for weapons
arbarians we should call them
asket making was understood by the women
arter was their method of trading
ronze implements followed those of bone

WILLIAM the Conqueror
as DUKE OF NORMANDY, he
aged war with the Saxons when the
ITACI declared HAROLD to be KING.
inning the Battle of Hastings gave him the Crown.
herever he went he was feared, but HERWARD
ilstood him for a long time in the FENS.
ILLIAM was a wise and firm ruler

Documentary Evidence. The value of documentary evidence cannot be too strongly urged, for children must know from what sources the present knowledge of past events has been derived. But by criticism and comparison with other contemporary writings the scholars are led to see that documents even may voice faulty conclusions, as there is always the writer's bias to be taken into consideration. And it is necessary that the children, while still young, should learn to judge from written matter what character the scribe possessed, what tastes, likes,

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and dislikes swayed him when he wrote, and to decide whether his document was the result of a balanced judgment. Thus in reading Froissart with care it becomes apparent that the author was an upholder of the nobility, and, in consequence, the reader will hesitate to accept his views whenever he deals with the sufferings of the poor, as in such passages as the following :

- (1) "The *evil disposed* . . . began to rise, saying, they were too severely oppressed; that at the beginning of the world there were no slaves," etc.
(2) "A *crazy* priest . . . called John Ball, who, for his *absurd* preaching, had been thrice confined in the prison . . . was accustomed . . . to preach to them and . . . say," etc. (3) "Some *who wished no good* . . . said 'John Ball . . . speaks truth.'" (4) "In order that gentlemen and others may take example, and *correct wicked rebels*," etc.

In order to examine the truth of such statements the pages of *Piers Plowman* are scanned. Here one finds William Langland preaching the doctrine of equality and bidding the knight "no more wrest gifts from his tenants nor misdo with the poor. . . . Though he be thy underling here, well may hap in heaven that he be worthier set and with more bliss than thou." He regards the rich as extortioners, and naturally the conclusion is drawn that his view was also one-sided. By this time the wise scholar

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will have seen that he must steer a middle course between the writings of the two men if he is to form a just estimate of social affairs at the time of the second Richard.

Similarly in daily life we are called upon to deduce motives from actions and character from speech, and it is of the utmost importance that we should lead our pupils to be prepared later to look upon all their fellow men and women with a just but critical eye, so that the obvious pitfalls and hidden dangers with which the road of life is strewn may be avoided.

Visits to Historical Monuments. In this way history becomes a real training-school for the mind, and documents, monuments, tombstones, and a hundred and one materials lie ready to our hands to help us to form a correct impression of the doings of the past.

Thus, finding that there was in the churchyard near by a tombstone on which was graven the following inscription :

D—, A—, S—
CAPTAIN IN THE —TH REGIMENT OF FOOT,
WHO DIED AUG. —TH, 181—.
FIRST SERVED AT THE BATTLE OF MAIDA, 1806,
AND WENT THROUGH THE PENINSULAR WAR
FROM VIMIERO TO TOULOUSE.
HE WAS ONE OF THE SIX OFFICERS WHO WERE
PRESENT AT THE BURIAL OF
SIR JOHN MOORE
AT CORUNNA, 1809

HARRAP'S DRAMATIC HISTORY

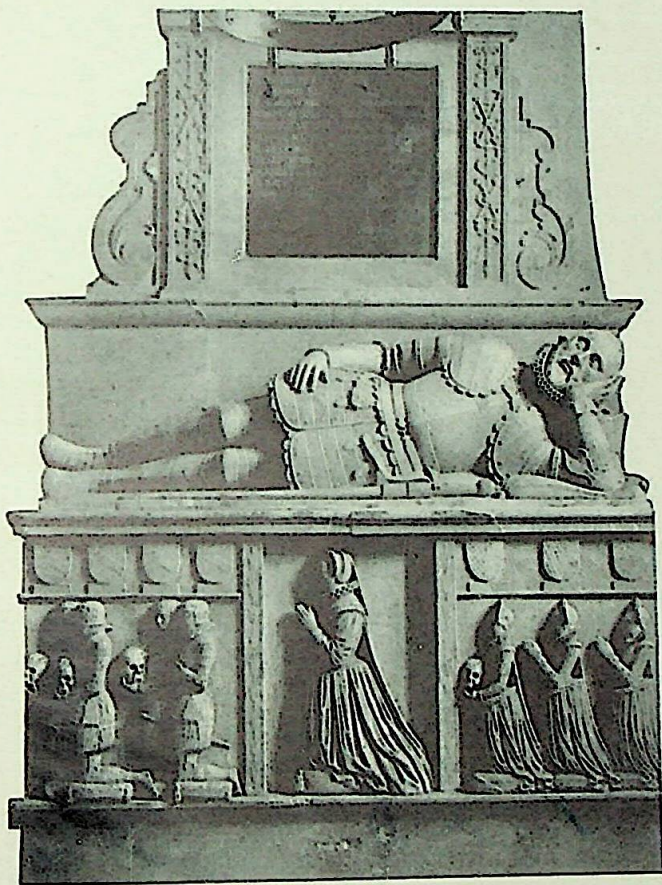
we made a visit to it, took sketches, and after a short talk on the spot returned to school feeling that the incidents of the Peninsular War were more real to us.

Only a month ago, while a farmhouse was being renovated, some old mural decorations were discovered. Once more a visit, sketches, and a talk left indelibly fixed on our minds the vision of an Elizabethan guest-chamber.

A walk to see a monument in the parish church first awakened our interest in heraldry and coats of arms, and also made it possible to introduce a short explanation of the method of deciphering the meaning of the sculptures. Thus we discovered that T—— S—— died in 1697, leaving a wife, two daughters, and his youngest son to mourn his loss, the three eldest sons and the eldest daughter having passed away before him—the skulls borne in their hands signifying that they were already dead when the monument was executed.

The attack and defence of a Roman camp half a mile away did more to teach us the strategical advantage of raised ground than twenty lectures would have done. And so instances could be multiplied of the possibility of turning surrounding objects of interest to educational advantage in the history lesson.

Moreover, the most abstruse detail of historical

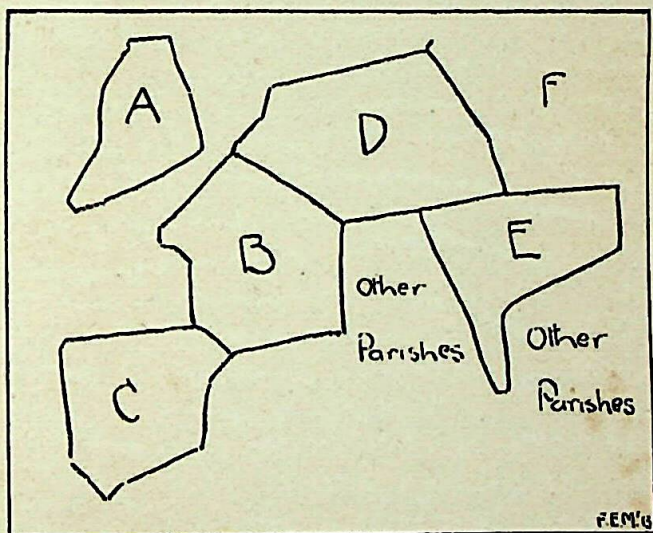


A Monument with a Story

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fact can be made concrete if only a little ingenuity be exercised.

The Parable Method. Finding children did not grasp the reason for England's interference in the War of the Spanish Succession, I tried the method of the parable. All the children were directly inter-



ested in farms and farming, for their parents were either tenant farmers or farm labourers, and they fully understood the relative value of 200 acres and 50 acres of land ; accordingly I put a hypothetical case to them, illustrating it with the accompanying plan.

In a village dwell six farmers whose acreages vary

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in extent and, therefore, in importance. C's farm falls vacant and the disposal of the land rests with the remaining five farmers. Supposing that both B and E make application for the farm, to whom should it be allotted ?

A has sufficient for his wants, but does not wish B to become more influential than himself ; D cannot satisfactorily till more ground ; F considers C's land too far removed for him to work both farms ; E has a farm not large enough to support both himself and his son, who has both time and inclination to cultivate a holding for himself ; B also has the ability and desire to acquire the land which subjoins his own. A decides to help the son of E to obtain the coveted acres, and so a quarrel arises between A and B for the sole reason that the former foresees a danger in the increased influence of the latter if B is allowed to rent the second farm.

The jealousy between the two farmers, which the children could readily understand, was then extended to jealousy between nations, and the term ' balance of power ' introduced.

A now becomes England, and the village street the English Channel ; B is called France ; C the debatable land of Spain ; E's son is the Prince of the House of Austria. England, jealous of the threatened increase of influence for France, and the consequent dislocation of the ' balance of power,'

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favours the claim of Austria and the dispute ends in war.

At this stage the battles are marked upon D's farm, and the varying fortunes of Marlborough's campaign are followed with an interest more than ever before when traced upon the map.

So the application of facts within the experience of the children to the truths of exterior life helps to success a lesson which had threatened failure.

CHAPTER III

HISTORY AND ITS RELATION TO OTHER SUBJECTS

Handwork. The dramatic presentation of the history lesson is, however, but one factor in the scheme of work when that lesson is to be the hub from which shall radiate the spokes of correlated instruction, and the hand-and-eye training must first claim attention. The old schemes of formal handwork, where exercises ranged from a tooth-brush rack to an inlaid tea-tray, were far from satisfactory, for every article or model a child forms by the medium of the hands, whether it be in paper, card, clay, or wood, must be made with a definite purpose and must serve a definite end. Only thus can the exercises become real. It is not sufficient to say, "The next model in the course is a soap-tray," and afterward proceed to make the article upon one pattern so that the soap-tray of A is the soap-dish of B, perhaps with a better finish, but still formed upon the stock model. There is no scope for individuality here—a certain manual dexterity is acquired, but it is as lifeless as the medium in which the child is working.

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If, however, a child is allowed to fashion from a piece of wood his own idea of a Roman sword or a Sedan chair, though the model may lack finish, a criticism of his own work will show him why the handle 'wobbles' or the door will not close, and from such conclusions he will learn how to accommodate himself to the varying nature of woods, how to apply different joints, the necessity for smoothness in the material and careful fitting.

Experience teaches, but if the experience is to be provided by the teacher and the work is to be done by the class the primary idea of education is lost, for the child is learning parrot fashion, and not as a result of his own experiment. The experience which is brought to bear upon the work must be the gradually expanding experience of the child, and the expedients he uses to fashion his model must be the expedients which he has himself tested and found successful.

Handwork by Experiment. A boy is given two pieces of wood and is told to fasten them together. Immediately he asks for a nail and a hammer. They are given; he nails the strips and sees if the result is satisfactory. At once he finds that one nail allows a certain amount of 'play.' Consequently he asks for two or three more, and when he puts them in notes that added firmness is gained. He tests

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his work once more and discovers that a strong pull 'draws' the nails. After a time he thinks that larger nails driven through the wood and 'clamped' on the other side will make the junction more secure. He experiments further and finds the result unsightly. Finally he discards nails and concludes that he must fit the pieces of wood together by some other method. So the 'half-lap' joint is evolved, and here again he finds a certain amount of play. He questions himself. What is wrong now? Soon he sees that the pieces must be fitted tightly, and accordingly he continues his experiment. Then perhaps he makes the strips fit too well and the wood splits. At last he strikes the happy medium, and, as a result of his own observation and experience, learns that the 'half-lap' joint, properly made, satisfies his present desire and his difficulty is overcome.

But one day such a joint does not answer his purpose and he is nonplussed. What shall he do at this stage? Set him searching among the objects of the class-room for another method of joining wood and let him apply the new knowledge to the problem. Better still, allow him to suggest fresh methods of attacking the difficulty, and encourage him to test his discoveries before setting them aside as useless.

Thus little by little he builds up his own theories

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and mentally concludes that "In such and such a case I must use this joint, in others I must use that method," and proves his thought by his own application.

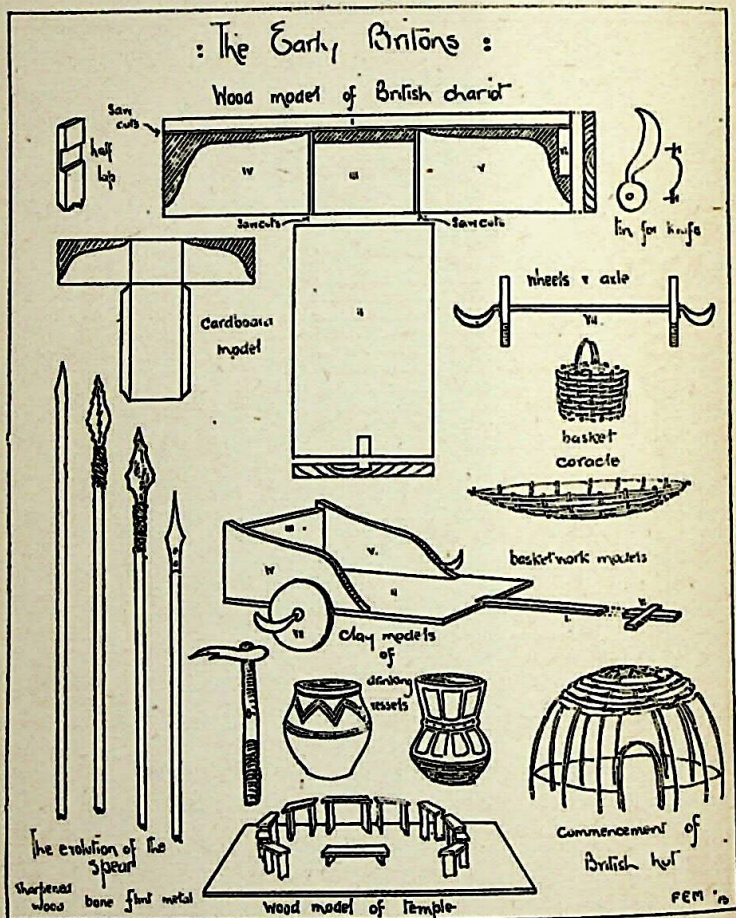
And there are a multiplicity of models which can be made in varying media, directly connected with the history course, and which lend themselves to this freedom of expression. In the earliest days some protection was sought from the attacks of beasts. The question arises: "Under similar conditions of life what should I do to defend myself?" Naturally the child seizes a stick. The stick must be heavy, the stick must be short—so the club is evolved. Gradually the idea of sharpening a point dawns on the intelligence, whilst to keep the animal farther at bay a longer pole is suggested. Thus the spear materializes. But the point breaks—another medium than wood must be used. The natural result is a sharpened stone fastened by leather thongs to the selected stake.

Another side of primitive life is touched upon—the necessity of procuring and storing food and drink. After a little thought the twig basket and clay vessel emerge.

Bridging the centuries, we turn our attention to Saxon times. Nearness to the sea breeds a desire for ships; the mode of life by piracy necessitates the provision of strong weapons; the possibility

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of attack by other peoples forces the erection of

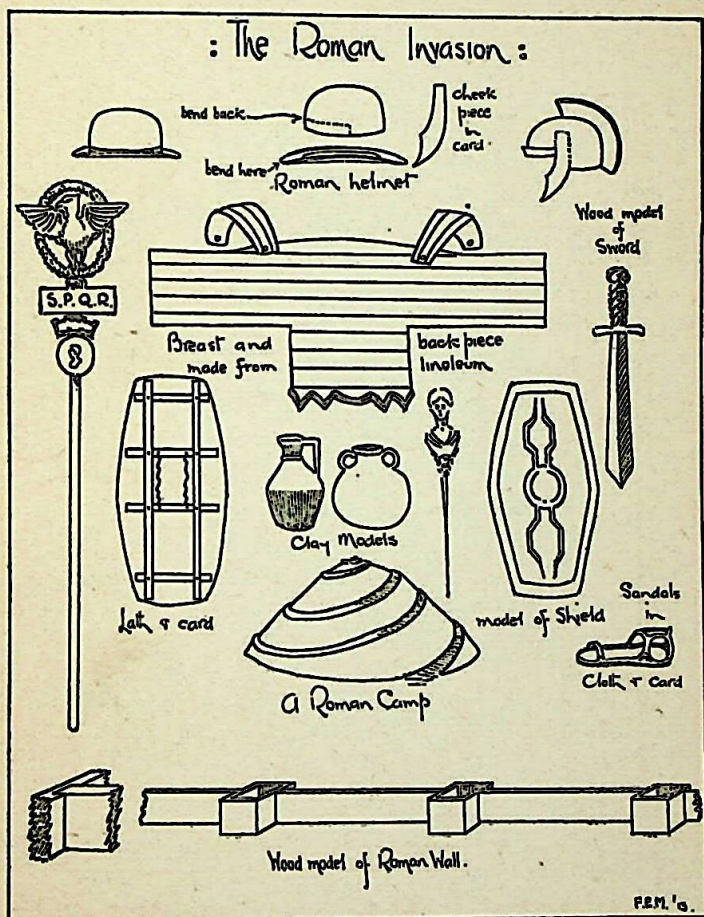


strong wooden buildings. Many models may be made from such a catalogue.

Later the problem of locomotion is considered,

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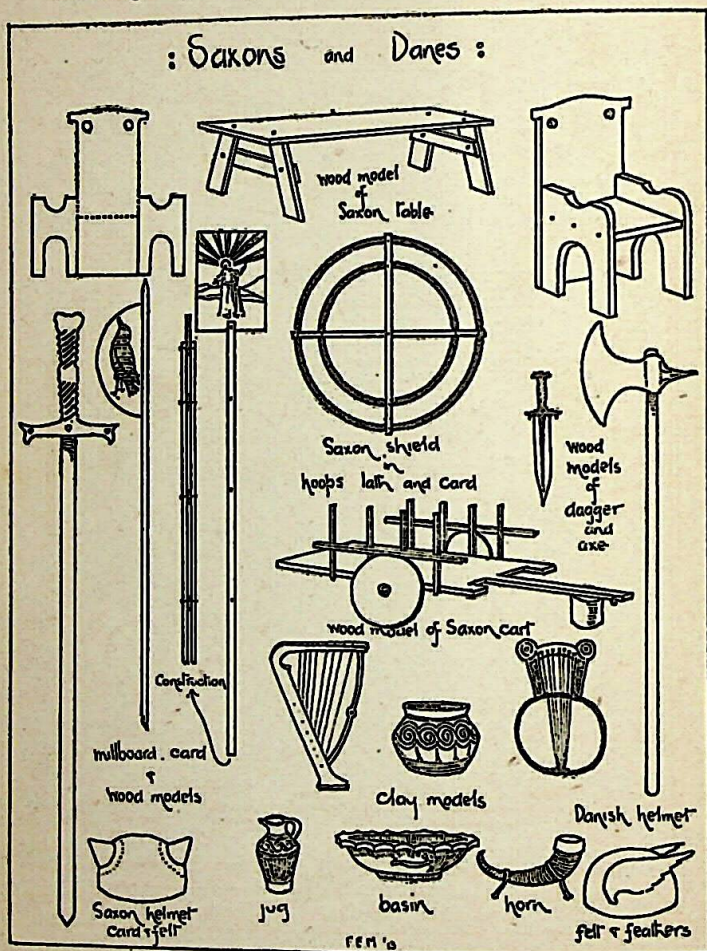
and the handwork lessons supply illustrations of the



successive steps from the early chariot to the modern motor-bus.

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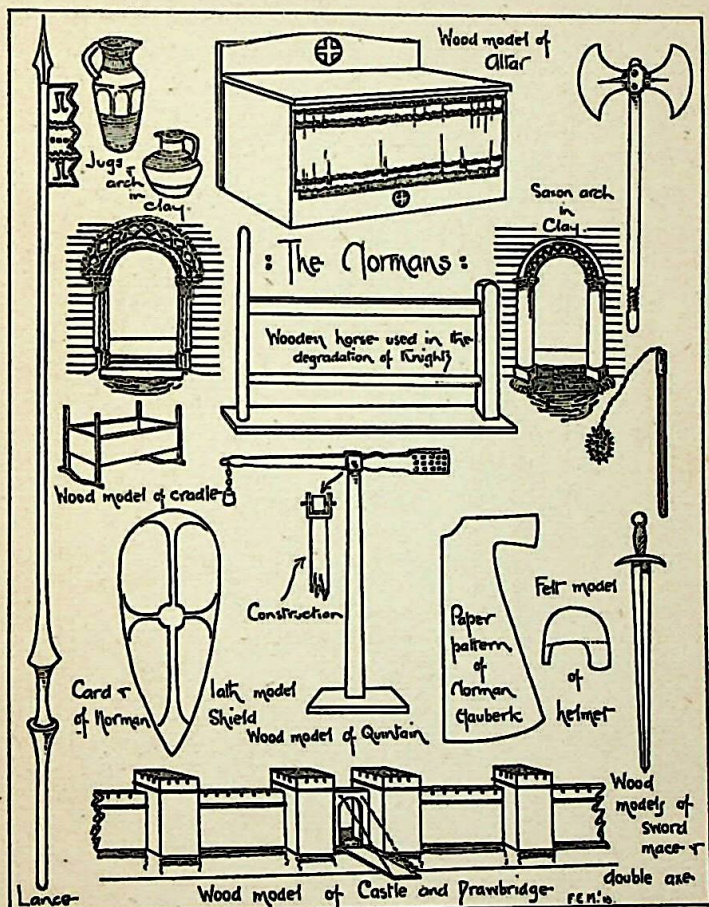
So stage by stage we go on making and modelling



this and that until we have a complete and reasonable fabric of historical production built up

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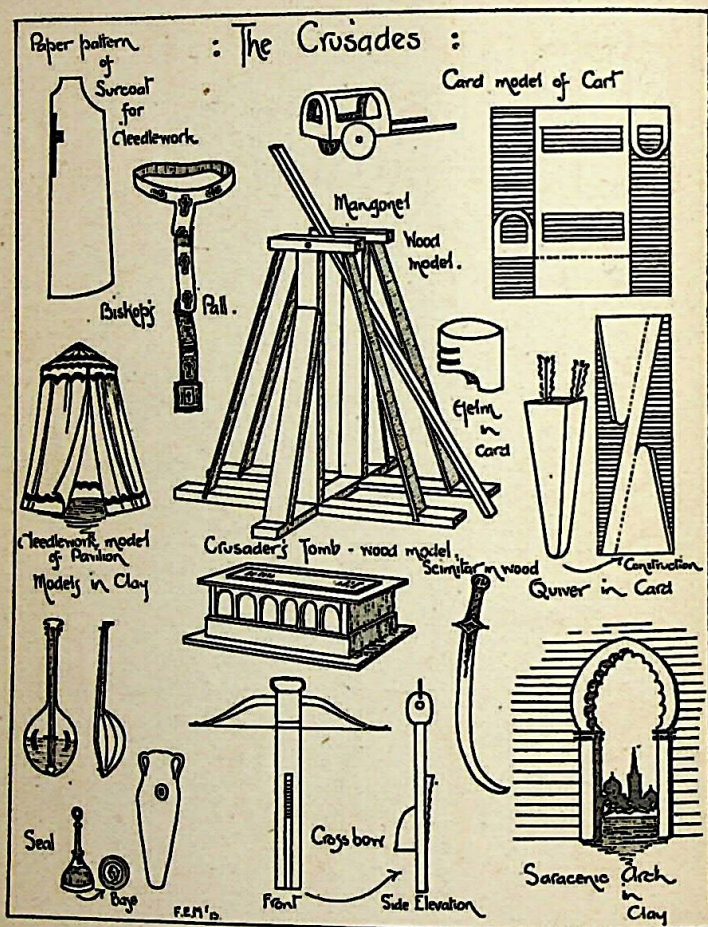
logically as a result of the children's own research.



Models in Wood, Cardboard, Clay, etc. With the idea of suggesting such a course I have endeavoured

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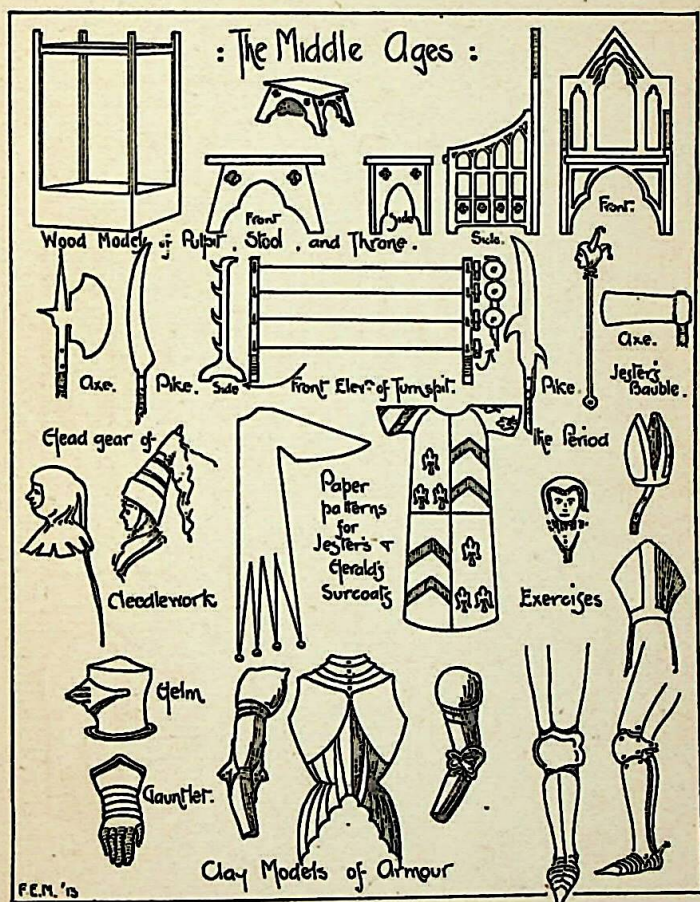
to outline suitable models for successive periods to



be carried out in varying media—models which have opened up many pleasant lanes of thought

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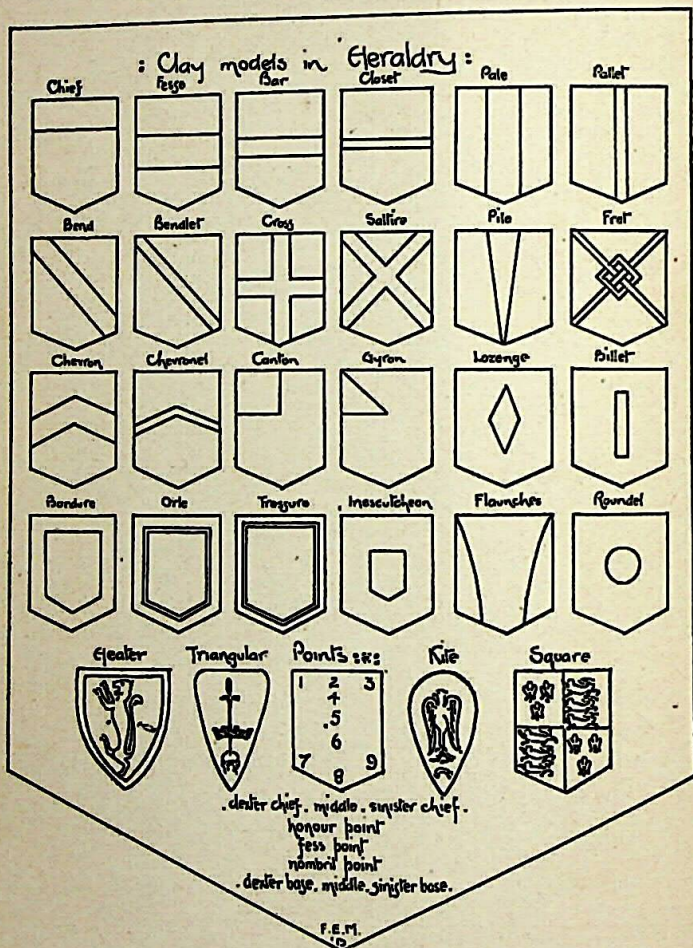
and as many varying methods of expression as there



have been children under my care. The designs are printed on pages 64 to 72.

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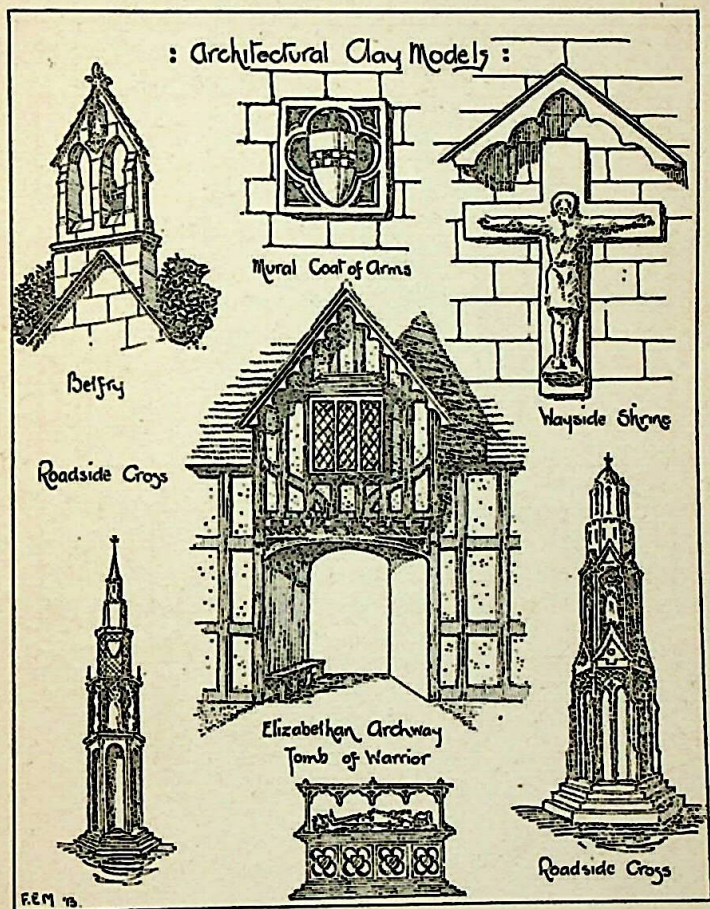
Not long ago we made a model of a British village,



and then constructed a Roman wall with mile forts
right across the playground. That wall and village
70

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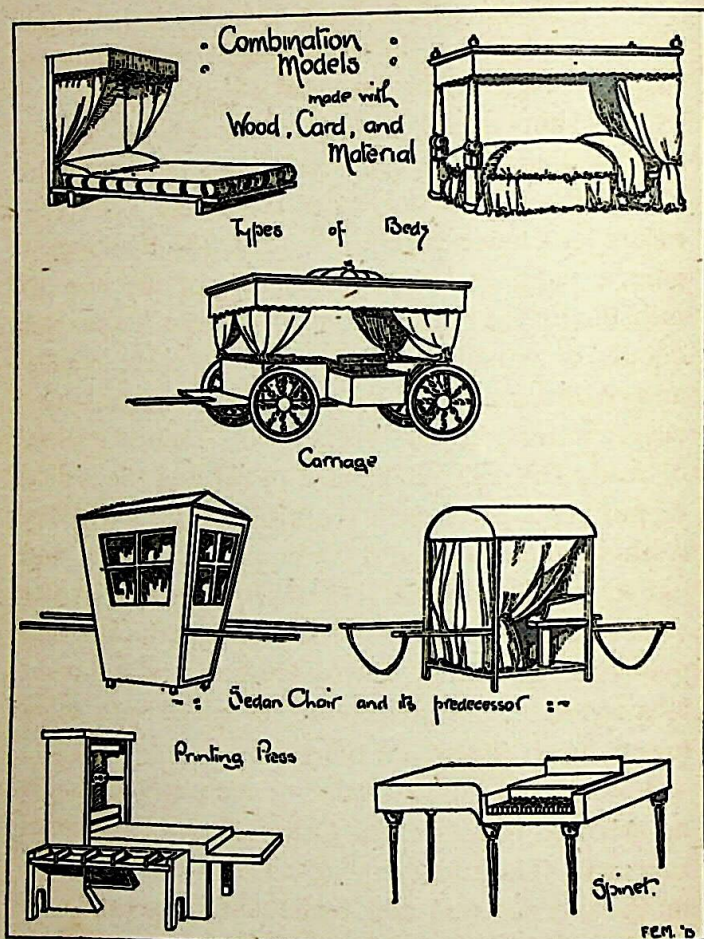
not only provided us with manual work and many



a lesson in historical detail, but also supplied a basis for impromptu games during recreation time.

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Needlework. Whilst the boys are employed in



woodwork the girls work side by side with them in the needlework lesson, some preparing costumes

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suited to the period of history under consideration, others dressing dolls to hang upon the walls of the class-room to show the development and change in dress throughout the centuries.

The simplest of materials, dilapidated aprons and the like, are brought from home and converted into flowing robes for court ladies and rich vestments for Church dignitaries. Incidentally the girls gain a more or less accurate idea of the way to measure up the human form. Moreover, the simpler details of patching and darning are more readily and enthusiastically grasped if a 'queen' discovers a rent in her 'regal robes' than if a piece of ready-cut calico is handed to her and she is told to put on a patch in a specified manner. Needlework becomes a most eagerly awaited lesson, and one in which I cannot help feeling that a greater variety of difficulties are successfully attacked and overcome than was the case when it was taught as a separate subject without connexion with other lessons upon the school time-table.

Music. The music syllabus of many schools makes no attempt to follow the historical development of that art. The rudiments of time, a few exercises in the old notation and tonic sol-fa, together with the learning of ten or a dozen songs selected haphazard—the choice varying according to the musical capabilities and taste of the teacher—and the

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syllabus is complete. The introduction of suitable songs into the school plays affords an opportunity to trace the growth of musical knowledge from its earliest inception in a sing-song reiteration of harsh, unrhythmic, discordant tones, through the period of glorious Gregorian chants to the Elizabethan era rich in lilting folk-song melodies.

For music has its claims as well as those other artistic subjects, the love of which we endeavour to foster in the hearts of our scholars, and undoubtedly it is an injustice to the past if the songs we teach are solely those of the present. True, the last few years have marked a great improvement in the knowledge of folk-games, dances, and songs, but so far as I am aware no definite effort has been made previously to link up the centuries from a musical standpoint in the manner attempted by Mr Erik Björn Hansen.

I can speak of the effectiveness of Mr Hansen's compositions,¹ for my scholars have taken a much keener interest in singing since they have been able to appreciate that music, like common household comforts or modern machinery, has passed through many phases before it became the wonderful melodic structure of to-day. Indeed, it follows that children will more readily assimilate a song which has direct

¹ A collection of these tunes is in preparation as this book is passing through the press, and will be published by Messrs Harrap and Co.

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bearing upon their general work than one which has no reference whatever to their school studies. It goes without saying that there are numbers of splendid songs ready to hand which lend themselves to adaptation for historical work. How could a lesson upon Trafalgar be more fittingly finished than by learning "The Death of Nelson," or one dealing with the voyages of Drake than by memorizing the more modern "Drake's Drum"? So the Napoleonic era could be linked up with the music lesson by teaching the "Marseillaise," and the '45 with "Charlie is my Darling," whilst the Georgian period calls to mind the "Vicar of Bray." A few minutes' thought would suggest many other suitable songs.

Work without Connexion. There does not seem to be much reason in a week's work which contains such divergent matter as a geography lesson upon the industries of Scotland, a history lesson dealing with the battle of Cr cy, composition on "The Story of a Rabbit" and "A Penny," and the learning of "John Peel." Such a week's work can only result in muddle, in which facts about shipbuilding, bolt-holes, rabbit-fur, bronze, and hunting are mixed up in inextricable chaos. A thoughtful view of such a course would have suggested 'Cr cy' as the central subject, the country between the Seine and the Somme as the portion for geographical instruc-

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tion, Conan Doyle's "Song of the Bow" as a musical exercise, and "The Windmill," by Longfellow, for recitation, while suitable composition exercises could be suggested by the score. No subject should be introduced into the modern school time-table upon the principle of the "Music, Drawing, and Dancing Extra" parodied by Lewis Carroll. If these subjects find their place in the curriculum they must not be thrown in as chance accomplishments, but carefully inserted as links in a coherent chain because of their binding value—to use a rough simile, as mental mortar for the material bricks of more matter-of-fact instruction.

Recitation and other Lessons. There is no need to insist upon the correlation of recitation with history, geography, and nature-study, whilst everybody recognizes the value of teaching history and geography side by side. In the same way the observation-lesson syllabus can be drawn up with an eye upon the history course.

The History Ladder and Drawing. Drawing I have already mentioned in connexion with the handwork lessons, but it has another side which serves as a great aid in fixing dates upon the minds of the children, and that is the construction of a 'History Ladder.'

Everybody knows how fond children are of sketching what they call "old men and women,"

The Danish



1035 Canute dies.

1025 Canute, King of England.

43 A.D. Aulus Plautius.

55 B.C. The Coming of the Romans.

The Beginning of Trade.

Visits from Foreign Traders.

Tribal Rule.

The Cave Men.

The Tree Men.

The Ancient Britons.

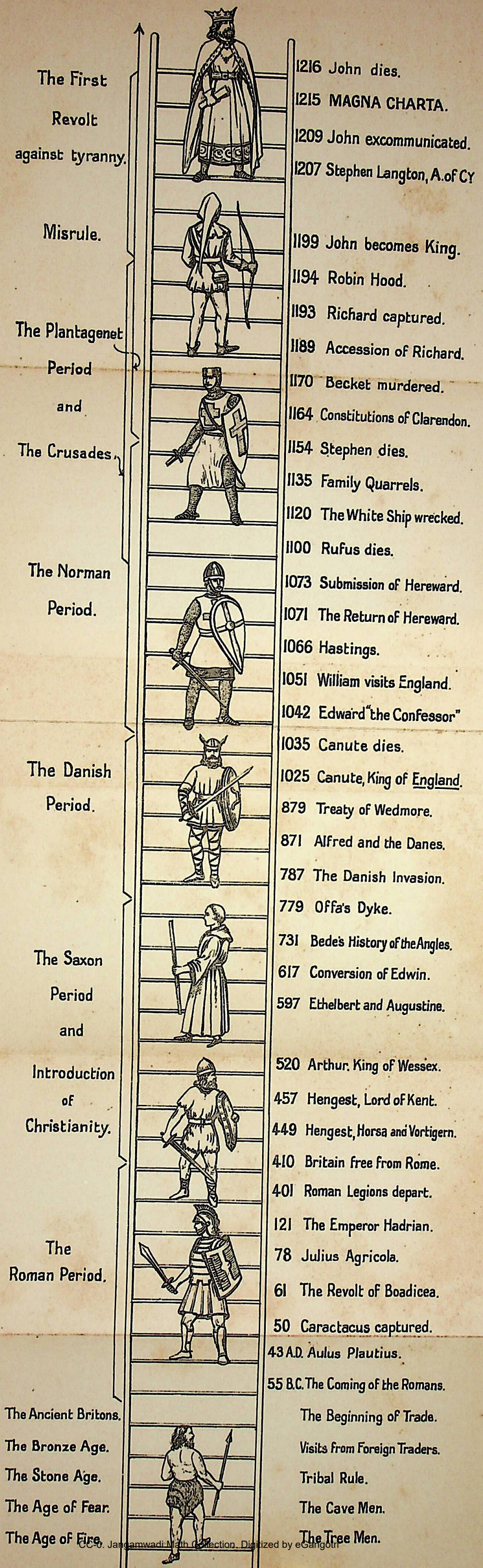
The Bronze Age.

The Stone Age.

The Age of Fear.

The Age of Fire.





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and this keenness for figure-drawing can easily be turned to account by permitting them to illustrate in suitable costume their ideas of the various people who lived in the years gone by.

My own history ladder is divided into three sections, which, at the suggestion of one of the boys, have been termed "The Three Ladders to English Liberty." They are made of strips of drawing-paper— $10\frac{1}{2}" \times \frac{3}{8}"$ and $3" \times \frac{3}{8}"$ —which, when pasted upon the brown paintwork of the partition, can be seen distinctly from any part of the class-room. Upon the rungs of the ladders are pasted, week by week, the drawn costumed figures—three inches in height—whilst at the side are fixed sketches of the utensils, weapons, and furniture of the times. Then upon the vacant rungs are printed the dates and salient points in history which it is desired shall be memorized as the course progresses.

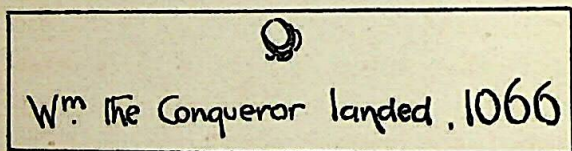
Thus upon my first ladder we have traced the history, costume, and incidental details from the earliest days to the sealing of Magna Charta; upon the second we have covered the ground from that time to the death of Charles I; but the third is now in the making, and when complete will carry the work up to the year of the Reform Bill.

The history ladder illustrated here differs slightly in detail from those upon the school wall, for the periods covered are shown on one side and the

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dates and facts upon the other. This has been done because the uprights and the rungs are not sufficiently wide to allow the printing to show with any clearness. But the idea is practically the same, and the figures upon the ladder—selected from the books of the pupils—show exactly the method we have followed to make the 'Ladders of Liberty' both attractive and useful.

A variation upon this scheme, suitable for girls, is a tape or string ladder, upon the cross-pieces of which dressed dolls are suspended, the dates and facts, printed upon cardboard strips, being attached by means of brass paper-fasteners passed through the card and bent as shown below.



Such methods undoubtedly result in added interest, and it is surprising with what celerity hitherto unappetizing facts and dates are digested.

Mnemonics as an Aid. It is very necessary, also, that the time-sense should be developed in the children's minds, and that the difference between the then and the now should be clearly grasped by each member of the class. Therefore, in addition

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to the fairly obvious device of the 'History Ladder,' I use mnemonics to assist in the task of memorizing dates. Of course it is an old teaching maxim that one should proceed from familiar and known facts to unknown data, using the old knowledge to fix upon the mind the new material which has to be assimilated. Remembering this rule, when a difficulty arose through the children forgetting the time of the wreck of the White Ship, I took a lesson solely and simply upon that date (November 25th, 1120).

Briefly, that lesson embraced the following steps. Every child was familiar with what is popularly termed 'Guy Fawkes' Day,' for the evening of the 5th of November is a time for bonfires and fireworks throughout England.

Accordingly, the words 'The Fifth of November' were placed upon the blackboard, and that phrase formed the mental association for the lesson.

The children soon supplied the succeeding steps. The Fifth of November was rewritten at their suggestion as the 5th day of the 11th month, and the connecting links with the required time followed quite simply, when the complete date, the 25th day of November, 1120, was placed below. The discovery was made that this could be written as :

$$5 \times 5 \quad / \quad 11 \quad / \quad 11(25 - 5).$$

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That is, five multiplied by itself, eleven written twice, and the result of five squared minus five ;
or,

$$25 \quad / \quad 11 \quad / \quad 1120.$$

Thus, whenever the wreck of the White Ship has to be recalled, Guy Fawkes' Day should supply all the necessary knowledge to secure the remembrance of the required date.

Such a method is a fine mental exercise, and the few examples given below should serve to show the way in which we dealt with the dates of other important events.

The battle of Hastings was fought on September 28th, 1066, or, as it would be written, 28/9/1066. The words 'Battle of Hastings' supply most of the information needed, for 'battle' has six letters, 'of' two, and 'Hastings' eight. Thus we obtain an eight, a two, and a six, and by arranging these figures we place 2 at the beginning, 8 next, and 6 at the end. The 2 at the beginning will easily recall that 6 has to be written twice at the end, the addition of 8 and 2 supplies the 10, whilst the number which occurs between 8 and 10 is 9.

Therefore the date of Hastings becomes :

$$\begin{array}{l} 2 \text{ and } 8 \quad / \quad 9 \quad / \quad (2 + 8) \text{ and } 6 \text{ written twice ;} \\ \text{or,} \quad 28 \quad / \quad 9 \quad / \quad 1066. \end{array}$$

Again, the date of the battle of Crécy requires

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to be fixed. This struggle took place on August 26th, 1346.

'Battle of Crécy' is the mnemonic, and this phrase contains thirteen letters. Twice 13 is 26, $2 + 6 = 8$, $6 - 2 = 4$, and the 6 necessary for completion is obtained from the fact that it is the figure with which we have been dealing to obtain the others.

Thus the date of the battle of Crécy is written as :

$$\begin{array}{r} 2 \times 13 \quad / \quad 2 + 6 \quad / \quad 13 (6 - 2) 6 \\ \text{or,} \quad \quad 26 \quad / \quad 8 \quad / \quad 1346. \end{array}$$

One other incident I will select at hazard—Wat Tyler's Rebellion—June 6th, 1381. 'Wat the Tiler's' is the mnemonic, for 'Wat' and 'the' contain between them six letters; 'Tiler's' also has six, and thus we procure 6 and 6. These added together supply the number 12, and 1381 is made up of twelves, $1 + 3 + 8$ giving 12, as does also $3 + 8 + 1$. The date is then written as :

$$\begin{array}{r} 6 + 6 = 1 + 3 + 8, \text{ or } 3 + 8 + 1 \\ \text{that is:} \quad \quad 6 \quad / \quad 6 \quad / \quad 138 \text{ and } 381 \\ \text{or,} \quad \quad \quad 6 \quad / \quad 6 \quad / \quad 1381. \end{array}$$

This example may seem to strain the point a little, but nevertheless the method has proved most effective.

CHAPTER IV

LEAVES FROM A TEACHER'S NOTE-BOOK

STANDARD II—40 children, mixed.

The *aim* of the week's lessons is :

A. To teach that Julius Cæsar came to Britain in the year 55 B.C. (to fix name and date).

B. To compare and contrast the respective conditions of life of the Britons and Romans.

MONDAY

Arithmetic (9.50—10.30).

Number Exercises in dealing with 55.

55 is made up of 5 tens and 5 units.

i.e. 5 times 10 + 5 times 1.

i.e. 5 times 10 + 1 or 5×11 .

i.e. 55 divided by 5 equals 11.

or 55 divided by 11 equals 5.

55 is 5 short of 60.

i.e. 55 is 40 + 5 short of 100.

i.e. $55 + 45 = 100$.

i.e. $100 - 55 = 45$.

LEAVES FROM A NOTE-BOOK

Suggested Problem on morning's work.

A boy has seven bags, each containing 23 marbles. If he wins 49 more marbles how many more must he gain to have 5 times 55 marbles ?

Reading (10.50—11.25).

A. Silent preparation of pages 84 and 85, *Dramatic History Reader*, Book I.

B. Explanation of difficult words.

Simple illustrations upon blackboard.

C. Reading exercise, with collection of words mispronounced.

D. Tracing of Cæsar's journey upon the map.

Composition (11.25—12).

From last week's lesson upon "The Coming of Commius."

Who was Commius ? Why did he come ?

How was he received ?

Who were the Druids ? Why did they dislike the Romans ?

What kind of character had Commius ?

How do you think Julius Cæsar would treat the Britons when he knew how Commius had been received ?

Write the answers to these questions in a short composition.

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Handwork (2.5—3.5).

The class is divided into four sections :

- (a) Card model of a Roman eagle.
- (b) Clay model of a Roman camp.
- (c) Wood model of a Roman sword.
- (d) Cutting out linoleum for Roman armour.

Observation Lesson (3.25—3.55).

Tin. Where it is found and how it is used.

The preparation of an alloy.

Singing (3.55—4.30).

Voice exercises.

The Song of the Women ("The Death of Gola").

TUESDAY

Arithmetic (9.50—10.30).

Money Exercises.

By practical demonstration (card coins) discover that—

55 farthings are 1 shg. and $1\frac{3}{4}$ d.

55 pence are 4 shgs. and 7d.

55 shgs. are £2, 15 shgs. and od.

† Multiplication and division by 4, 12, and 20.

Suggested Problems.

A boy has 3s. 11d. How many farthings must he collect to make up 4s. 7d. ?

LEAVES FROM A NOTE-BOOK

A bag contains 55 farthings, 55 pence, and 55 shillings. How much money is in the bag? Give the answer in £ s. d.

Reading (10.40—11.25).

A. Silent preparation of pages 85-92, *Dramatic History Reader*, Book I.

B. Explanation of difficult words.

Simple illustrations upon blackboard.

C. Reading exercise (selected difficult passages).

Geography (11.25—12).

Examination of the map of Europe.

Discovery of the position of Rome.

Discovery of the nearest point in Europe to England.

The Straits of Dover.

The sea voyage from Rome to England.

The Mediterranean.

The countries passed.

The land journey. The mountain barriers.

The Alps.

Marking out the probable journey of Julius Cæsar.

Preparation of diagrammatic chart.

Correction of Exercise Books (2.20—3.5).

Drawing.

(a) Selected articles of Roman pottery or coins from *The Dawn of British History* (Harrap and Co.).

HARRAP'S DRAMATIC HISTORY

(b) The last 15 minutes given to the collection and discussion of general errors.

Needlework (3.25—3.55).

Nature Study.

Girls prepare Roman helmets from old 'bowler' hats, while boys collect flowers, etc., from Watling Street.

Composition (3.55—4.30).

Describe, in short sentences (History Note-books), the habits and customs of the Britons at the time of the coming of the Romans ("The Coming of Commius").

WEDNESDAY

Arithmetic (9.50—10.30).

Weight Exercises.

Discover by practical weighing that—

(a) 55 drams make up 3 oz. 7 drams.

(b) 55 oz. make up 3 lb. 7 oz.

(c) 55 lb. make up 1 quarter 27 lb.

Multiplication and division by 16 and 28.

Suggested Problem.

Three sacks each contain 17 lb. 15 oz. How many more ounces would have to be added to the contents of the sacks to make up 55 lb. ?

LEAVES FROM A NOTE-BOOK

Drill (10.50—11.25).

Official Syllabus.

Five minutes' free drill—actions to fit entrance of the Britons ("Julius Cæsar"). Kneeling and holding out the hands in supplication.

Reading (11.25—12).

Rehearsal of play and making of sketch-plan.

Dramatic History (2.5—3.5).

"Julius Cæsar."

Composition (3.25—3.55).

Preparation of Summary of Events (History Note-books).

Singing (3.55—4.30).

Voice exercises.

The Mistletoe Song ("The Death of Gola").

THURSDAY

Arithmetic (9.50—10.30).

Length Exercises.

Mark out 55 inches upon the floor. Calculate with the foot-rule the number of feet and inches.

Similarly, discover how many yards in 55 feet.

Mark out the length of a cricket-pitch in playground.

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Find by measurement the number of feet by which the length exceeds 55 feet.

Suggested Problem.

A boy scores 12 runs in a cricket-match. If for one run he moves over 20 yards of ground, how many times 55 feet has he run when his innings is complete?

Reading (10.50—11.25).

Continuation of *The Cave Boy* (Harrap and Co.).

Composition (11.25—12).

Make up a conversation between a Roman soldier and a British prisoner, the Roman seeking information about the land of Britain.

Drill (2.20—2.45).

Official Syllabus.

Organized Games (2.45—3.20).

Cricket, handball, or football matches between selected teams of Britons and Romans.

Observation Lesson (3.20—3.55).

Bronze—its manufacture and uses.

Copper coins (ancient and modern).

Correction of Books (3.55—4.30).

Collection and discussion of individual errors made in Tuesday and Wednesday's History Notes.

LEAVES FROM A NOTE-BOOK

FRIDAY

Arithmetic (9.50—10.30).

Collected problems dealing with number 55, involving number, money, weight, and length.

Free Illustration (10.50—11.25).

Drawing, for the History Note-books, any articles illustrative of the Roman period and culture.

Geography (11.25—12).

Examination of the map of England.

Discovery of Kent and Cornwall.

Discovery of Deal (the landing-place of Julius Cæsar).

Recapitulation of places in Britain already known—Lyndin (London), Stonehenge, Mona (Anglesea).

A journey to-day from Deal to London.

Watling Street marked (the Kent portion).

Mapping out the course of the S.E. & C. Railway.

A journey to-day from London to Cornwall.

Mapping out the course of the G.W. Railway.

Handwork (2.5—3.5).

Completion of Monday's models.

Singing (3.25—3.55).

Voice exercises.

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The Song of the Women ("The Death of Gola").

The Mistletoe Song ("The Death of Gola").

History Note-books (3.55—4.30).

Pasting up the drawings collected from newspapers, magazines, and other sources illustrating any phase of Roman life.

A Teaching Note. As the success of dramatic history largely depends upon the oral training the children receive in other lessons, the following notes were made so that it might be kept in mind which points, in dealing with questioning by the teacher and answering by the class, should be avoided or insisted upon.

A. Monosyllabic answering is bad.

B. Sentence-answering, if artificial and not the natural form of speech to the question proposed—that is, if it is merely done to the command, "Answer in a sentence"—is also to be condemned.

C. Sentence-answering, or the delivery of more than a sentence in response to a question, is desirable in general.

D. The way to get natural sentence-answering is (after and along with teaching of articulation in word-building and spelling lessons, or in the preparation of reading and recitation exercises):

To put questions in a form which demands the sentence-answer.

LEAVES FROM A NOTE-BOOK

In object-lessons, history, and geography this is a fairly simple matter. The questions are largely commands: "Tell me about the stem," "Tell me the cause of such and such an event," or broad questions, such as, "What was the result of this, that, or the other action?"

A similar method should be practised in number lessons, say after the needful detailed questions have been put, in the lower standards where actual objects are being used and the lessons are concrete in form. Thus, after sevenpence has been subtracted from one shilling and threepence the question should be, "What have you done?" or, better, "Tell me about it,"—reduced to the simple, "You, Jack!" or the like when the method is established—and not "How much is left?" And the children should be led to answer: "I took sevenpence from one shilling and threepence and have eightpence left."

This is carried right through the arithmetic, and, indeed, right through all lessons and classes in the school, and as a result the freedom of speech at which we are aiming for dramatic purposes is successfully obtained.

CHAPTER V

COSTUMES, PROPERTIES, AND EFFECTS

I HAVE been asked many times: "And how do you manage to obtain your costumes and properties for these plays?" Always my answer has been the same: "We *make* them from odds and ends."

Thereby the seeds of ingenuity and intelligence are developed. Ready-made costumes are certainly more attractive to the eye, but they leave only a small impression upon the brains of the pupils; they are more elaborate, but have entailed no research and no effort on the part of the children, and although greeted with great enthusiasm at first, their splendours soon pall and their details are forgotten. During the days we were dealing with the attack upon Gibraltar I took to school the sword of a naval officer of that period. Everybody was eager to handle it, to draw it from its scabbard and wave it valiantly in the air. But next week most of the children claimed to have made a much better one for themselves.

That is the spirit I have tried to awaken; it is the

PROPERTIES AND EFFECTS

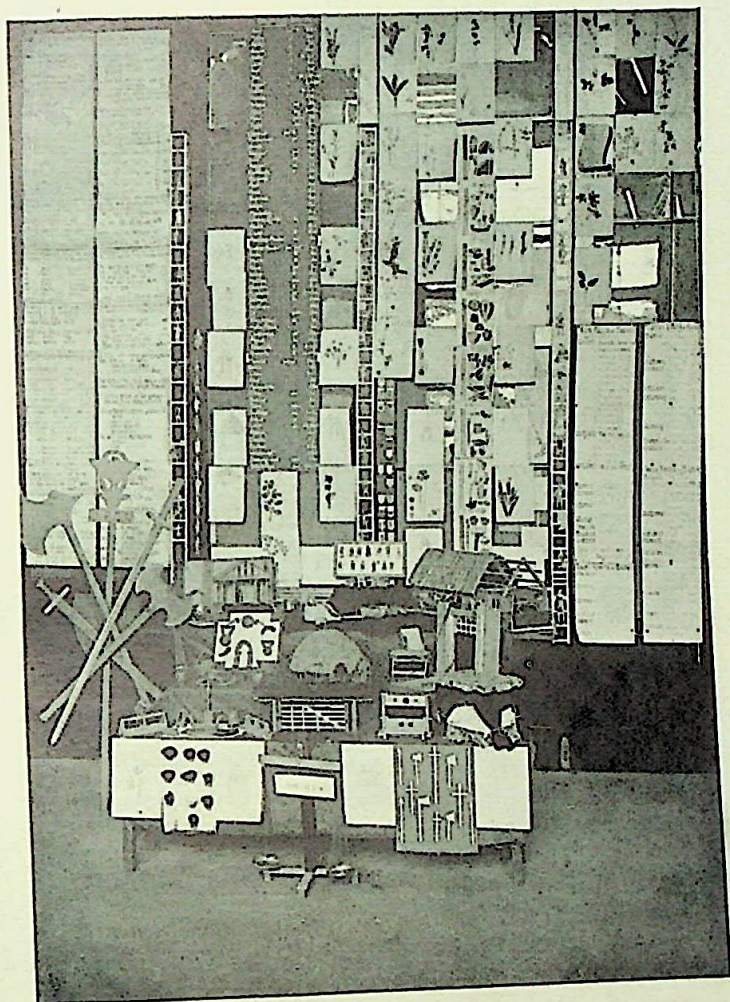
spirit we should all try to awaken, the spirit of emulation—the desire to make and to do. When we were children years ago the ‘windmills’ we bought were not nearly so carefully treasured as those we made ourselves; the beautiful new china doll was soon cast aside for the old favourite which we had fashioned from an odd piece of wood, and wrapped up tenderly in a shabby dress produced from a cast-off handkerchief.

It is useless to consider additional expense—the ordinary school equipment soon swallows up the yearly grant from the Committee, while moneys gained by periodic entertainments would be but a drop in the ocean of expenditure if costumes for historical and other plays had to be bought or hired. No! there is nothing to be done but to make everything ourselves. Therefore old skin rugs provide the dresses for our Ancient Briton plays (Book I to p. 83), sheets or tablecloths—sometimes very dilapidated—robe the forms of Boadicea and the priests, and bean-poles, with pointed blades, fashioned from wood and bound on with string, make extremely serviceable spears. Shields, in many cases, are plaited from willow twigs, but the more ambitious children brandish the lids from soiled-linen baskets with great pride. An old reaping-hook is utilized for the Druid’s emblem of office, a cardboard crown

HARRAP'S DRAMATIC HISTORY

adorns the brows of succeeding kings and queens, twig baskets and old bread-pans are treasured possessions of Ancient British matrons, who work industriously beneath the shade of noble trees (in reality children perched upon chairs taken from the class-rooms and grasping in their hands leafy branches procured on the way to school). An old tin tray lustily beaten gives a good imitation of thunder ("The Fire People"), and the occasional burning of strips of magnesium ribbon serves to suggest vivid flashes of lightning. I am positive that from our rough-and-ready properties and effects we get as much enjoyment and instruction as could be obtained from the expensive appointments of a regular theatrical company.

Moreover, it is so simple to convert a British warrior into a Roman soldier ("The Coming of Commius" to the end of Book I). The skin rug is discarded for a girl's pinafore, which is soon partially covered with front and back pieces of metal-bound armour, made from odd bits of linoleum on which have been fastened lengths of "tin" cut from old kettles and pans whose day of usefulness in the kitchen is over. So that the knickers shall not show (which really does not matter), they are rolled above the knee, and other scraps of linoleum shaped like shin-guards are bound about the legs. A lath sword and a helmet



**Models in Clay, Card, Wood and Wax, with History Ladder
and Sketches by Children**

PROPERTIES AND EFFECTS

which once has been a bowler hat complete the metamorphosis. The Roman eagle provides a fret-work exercise of considerable difficulty if made from wood, but a model in stiff cardboard is quite as effective.

Later, for the Saxon plays (Book II to p. 57) similar clothing can be used. The skin rug is now worn over the pinafore, the crowned helmet has its ridge removed, and in its place are fastened side wings (remnants of a plucked bird), the short stabbing sword is exchanged for one of ampler proportions or for a spear made from a carefully carved blind-roller or broom-handle. Meanwhile leather thongs take the place of the linoleum shin-guards of the Roman legionary.

The girls' hooded mantles make splendid monastic garb, with the addition of a length of rope and a small wooden cross ("The Coming of St Augustine"). The larger crucifix and the pictures upon poles are quite easily fashioned from builders' laths, the amount of ornamentation upon them being directly dependent upon the manual and artistic skill of the scholars concerned in the making of them.

The only changes necessary for the representation of a Dane ("The Story of Beowulf") are the replacing of the skin rug by an ample cloak reaching to the waist, for which purpose old shawls are

HARRAP'S DRAMATIC HISTORY

requisitioned, and the drawing-on over stockings and knickers of a pair of full-length 'pants,' long ago cast off by father. These, wrapped round again and again with longer leather thongs, give just the desired effect of the leg-covering of the Danish invaders. Shields are made by covering wooden hoops with some strong material, such as sacking, which is later given a coating of tin-foil taken from tea-chests, and the double-bladed axe is soon made from either card or wood during a handwork lesson.

The harps used in "The Minstrel" (Book II, p. 71) and succeeding plays call the fret-saw into use once more, and an empty soap box, bought for a few pence from a neighbouring grocer, provides material for tolerable imitations of the Saxon instrument. Wires—used in paper-flower making—passed from top to bottom aid the illusion, and though the sound emitted is anything but musical the voices of Alfred and his companion drown any defects. The Danish flag is constructed from the ever useful builders' laths, together with a semi-circular piece of cardboard (half the lid of a bonnet box), upon which the form of a raven is roughly painted in black ink.

Oftentimes we are at our wits' ends to know just what to use to give the needed impression of costume, when an opportune suggestion from one of the more



The Mermaid Tavern—Entrance of Kit Marlowe
 (Costumes made by the children)

PROPERTIES AND EFFECTS

ingenious children smooths away the difficulty. And at times so much into detail have we gone that I have had children during the morning object to the shape of the arches which lead from the hall into the 'cap-rooms' as being Norman instead of Saxon in shape. I have returned in the afternoon to find pieces of paper, correctly curved, lightly attached to the offending arches to show the effect of properly designed openings. The ingenuity of children is scarcely ever at a loss. Given a good picture of the dress, furniture, or surroundings of any period, boys and girls will find something at home or in school just suited to the making of an imitation. And it is because of the variation between children that it is increasingly difficult to suggest substitutes for costumes; one can only lay down general principles and leave the rest to the scholars themselves.

Thus sheets, curtains, and tablecloths are brought once more to clothe the courtiers of Canute; broad bracelets, brooches, and ornaments are manufactured from cocoa tins and other cheap shining materials; while the throne of the king being too large an object for us to attempt, we must content ourselves by cutting out card and wooden models according to the pattern which individual fancy dictates.

Edward the Confessor—fortunate individual!—was presented with a crimson cloak (a faded window-

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blind) bordered with ermine (really wadding upon which specks of black cloth had been sewn), and in future every king, unless engaged upon some warlike expedition, is expected to appear in public wearing such a garment. The costume which baffled us more than any other was a suit of chain mail ("Edward the King"), and I believe it would have evaded us to this day had we not had a surplus stock of grey holland which 'took' ink easily and cut up into quite a respectable tight-fitting garment. Circular ink lines were afterward marked upon it, and, at a distance, the desired effect was produced. Similarly heralds' surcoats were prepared, the coats of arms being drawn upon them with blue pencil. As a result no window-blind, however faded and of whatever colour, is considered too poor to be used in the construction of some portion of the clothing of mediæval times.

The more weighty jointed armour of Crusading days ("The Capture of Richard") is constructed from pieces of stiff cardboard (painted over with a mixture of Chinese white and black ink), which are connected by brass paper-fasteners, and visored helmets are produced from materials of the same character. Stout cardboard is needed—carton soon tears—and once made, the suits will render service for many weeks. As far as possible each child makes his or her own 'properties' after being

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A group of home-made costumes illustrating periods in English History

PROPERTIES AND EFFECTS

'measured up' by a friend, and in this way individual pride is stimulated. There is no carelessness or neglect because the costume belongs to another, no grumbling because the fit is poor, and no complaining because one child is not quite as clean as he might be. Shields are always stumbling-blocks, more or less, as it is almost impossible to get pieces of wood or metal of the requisite length that are not too weighty for easy manipulation, but a framework of laths covered with sacking, holland, or linen is sufficiently serviceable and quite attractive-looking when the knightly device is painted upon it.

Bows and arrows ("Robin Hood") are made in plenty from stout yew branches and split garden canes, bowstrings from ordinary string (treble thickness) knotted at intervals, quivers from cardboard, and targets from the tops of barrels fixed to two of the legs of a tripod stand. Cross-bows also are easy to produce, for a thick piece of wood shaped and grooved like a short gun-stock needs but a small bow fixed to the end to give as good a representation as will be required.

And so one could pass on through the years covered by the plays, offering suggestions, pointing out, for example, that the head-dress of the Austrian women can be made from rulers placed flat on the head and covered with dusters, which are then fastened beneath the chin ; that a bishop's mitre can

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be made from drawing-paper, lances from bamboo, rapiers from garden canes and gum-bottle caps, the ample skirts of Elizabethan days constructed, crinoline fashion, over hoops, and powder barrels from empty size barrels, which any builder or decorator would be pleased to furnish ; and that the shoes of King Charles are effectively imitated by ordinary school boots turned in to the ankles, with the leather tongue protruding, hanging down over the lace holes and fastened by a tin buckle cut from an empty mustard tin. Again, the flowing hair of Cavalier gentry is satisfactorily simulated by wigs made from unravelled rope, and Puritan hats are fashioned from carefully shaped, black-faced cardboard. These discoveries, and many others, will be most certainly made by any set of intelligent and interested children, aided by suggestions of parents and teachers, and so it is best to leave them to the gratifying task of finding out how to dress themselves inexpensively for the dramatic history lesson, and pass on to the actual working of a stated play.

CHAPTER VI

" THE OUTLAWS OF SHERWOOD "

I HAVE selected this play primarily because it is one for which the children are fortunate enough to be well equipped, both in regard to reading matter on the period and material suitable for producing costumes and effects, and, secondly, because it is a favourite with the scholars, and therefore illustrates exactly the procedure we follow in dealing with any of our simple dramas. It may be taken for granted that we have revelled in J. W. McSpadden's *Stories of Robin Hood*, and have gleaned further information from Miss Estelle Ross's *From Conquest to Charter*; also we have often modelled in clay, card, or wood the many things mentioned therein, and have painted and cut out card scenery according to our conception of Sherwood Forest, until our ideas of the period and place have become as real to us as the details of our own time, and as well known as the paths and 'rides' in neighbouring fox-coverts. And knowing that this play was to be taken during the week, we have made more or less successful long-bows,

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and have striven frequently to discharge our clumsy arrows (again more or less successfully) at unwary friends. In other words, we have attempted to gain the correct atmosphere for the proper enactment of an incident from the life of the famous outlaw. Already the children have selected those among them most suited in appearance and manner to take the parts of the characters in the play, and they tell me they have chosen Grace, our strongest and most buxom girl, because they believe she will make a splendid Friar Tuck. Hugh, a sturdy and essentially just lad of well-marked artistic tendencies, is cast for the part of Robin Hood. Percy, the tallest boy in the school, is chosen to fill the rôle of Little John. Wilfrid, a wiry, enthusiastic child, is considered to be most suited to the character of Will Scarlet, and, with a certain amount of humour, Ewan, a precocious local organist of eleven, is picked out to play Allan-a-Dale, a minstrel. Upon Arthur, the most irrepressible comedian of them all, the choice has fallen for Middle the Tinker, while Bertha, a girl of quite exceptional dramatic talent, fills the 'star' rôle of the Black Knight. She suggests that to Olive, her close friend, shall be given the part of Sir Richard of the Lea.

Monday morning's silent preparation and explanation of difficult words has, or should have, cleared away all barriers to fluency, so that we are ready

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THE OUTLAWS OF SHERWOOD

on Wednesday morning to rehearse during the reading lesson the whole of the dialogue of the play. Reading books, clay and clay-boards, or drawing-pads, are the needed apparatus for the lesson. The scene is a glade ringed by trees and undergrowth, with a path traversing it. Accordingly, a rough model scene has been made in clay or constructed from card, or can be drawn in plan form by each child, while, as there are eight chief characters, eight pieces of clay roughly shaped into the semblance of each person, or eight bone counters, are ready labelled with strips of paper. Thus when the stage directions are, "Enter the Black Knight riding, with Friar Tuck walking by his side," two labelled figures enter by the path, and are placed in various positions in the glade according to the will of the children. This plan is followed to prevent confusion later when the play is actually being acted. The first step finished, Bertha, as the Knight, commences to read her part from the book, and when she has completed her initial speech she suggests suitable actions to accompany certain words or phrases, which are accepted or altered as the other scholars demand. Thus she wishes to make a pointing gesture toward the moss-grown bank as she utters the word 'see,' and a boy suggests that she should wave her hands in the direction of the trees as the word 'greenwood' is spoken. Both suggestions

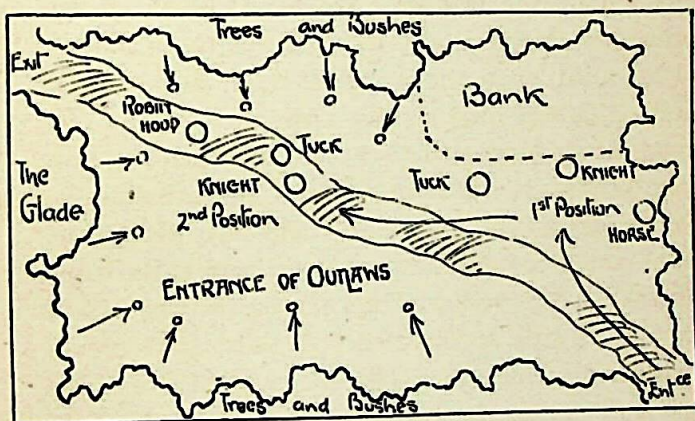
HARRAP'S DRAMATIC HISTORY

are accepted. Then Grace, as Friar Tuck, continues the reading, and so they go on, each taking turn until stopped by the class for some error in speech, punctuation, or inflexion.

Here let me outline a simple method of correction of reading errors by the children unaided and yet directed by the teacher. We have laid down the principle—and it is one which keeps the attention of all fixed upon the work—that, as any error is noticed, a tap with a ruler upon the desk by any child, at the end of the sentence in which the mistake occurs, is sufficient to draw the attention of the reader to the fact that a slip has been made. That sentence must be read again, and if the same mistake is repeated a further tap on the desk shows that it is still uncorrected. A third trial proves either carelessness or a lack of knowledge, and the teacher's familiarity with the powers of the child reading determines that point. The scholar who has first observed the error now corrects the blunder, and the work proceeds. Such correction does not mean disorder—far from it: it means keen attention, and it breeds a desire to read without drawing down upon oneself the fault-finding of fellow-pupils. Many children do not mind being corrected by their teachers—"He [or "She"] knows more than we do" is their reflection—but they shrink from being put right by Tom who is younger or Alice who lives next door.

THE OUTLAWS OF SHERWOOD

So with occasional interruptions the reading continues until Robin Hood enters, when another labelled figure or counter appears upon the scene, his point of entrance and probable position being discussed until settled to the satisfaction of all. Now three children are at work reading aloud in



Sketch-plan of "The Outlaws of Sherwood"

turn until the entrance of all the outlaws, at which point more labelled clay figures or counters are placed in position near the figure of the mounted knight. By this time the sketch-plan has assumed the appearance of the accompanying drawing.

Thus the rehearsal proceeds, figures and counters being moved here and there, on or off the 'boards,' or plan, as the action notes direct, whilst children are reading, laughing, or singing, singly or in chorus.

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as the needs of the play demand, until the whole of the dialogue has been taken.

In the succeeding writing lesson the juvenile actors write down their own portions of the play in note-books kept for the purpose, transcribing or paraphrasing as they please. As the Knight enters first and occupies the stage practically throughout the scene, it will be best to take extracts from the book of Bertha showing how she fits words and suggested actions together.

THE OUTLAWS OF SHERWOOD

RÔLE—THE BLACK KNIGHT

Dress—A suit of black armour, helmet with visor closed, white surcoat bearing red cross at back and breast, long sword, golden spurs, shield hanging from saddle of horse.

Knight (enters, riding slowly, stops when mossy bank is reached, looks round with delight and then turns to Tuck). By my faith! this is peace indeed. See (pointing to the bank) yon bank spells rest and content to the weary traveller. (Dismounts slowly as if tired, leads horse to nearest tree and passes bridle over hanging bough. Then he returns to the mossy bank, sits down, and finally stretches himself on his back.) Court and camp have I known, but the good greenwood (waving his hands in the direction of the surrounding trees) calls out all that is best in man.

Tuck. Verily . . . world.

Knight (smiling and sitting up briskly). And ye tell me that hereabouts Robin Hood is to be found? 'Tis well! for I carry a message to him (laugh) from the king.

Tuck. Yea . . . forest.

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Knight (turning to Tuck). Judge no man, brother ; I think no harm of Master Hood, but much do I desire to see him.

Tuck. Methinks . . . way.

Knight (stretching himself upon his back once more). Aye, man of peace, troll thy lay, for 'tis long time since I heard an honest English stave.

Tuck. Then . . . Hearken ! (*Sings as knight listens attentively, nodding his head in time to the music*) . . . tree.

Knight (sitting up and laughing merrily). Marry ! for a man of peace thou showest, etc., etc.

Similarly all the leading characters have been writing out their parts, and, as they finish, they go into the hall or playground to try over their rôles in private, introducing and practising such actions as they consider suited to the words. Meanwhile the rest of the children—those who have no definite part to bear, but act as a chorus—are writing out their united speeches and learning their entrances and exits in the following manner :

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CHORUS

Dress—Green jacket belted at waist, close-fitting hose and shoes, tailed cap, long-bow, quiver and arrows, short sword or hunting-knife.

Robin Hood (claps his hands). Hither, friends !

Break through undergrowth or step from hiding-places behind trees. Take up positions in a close ring round the three speakers. Nod heads in recognition of Tuck. Examine

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the knight curiously—discuss and point out to one another his armour and crest.

Knight. Oh . . . of rangers. (*Laugh.*)

Robin Hood. God . . . all. (*Wave bows, etc.*)

All. Aye! God save the King!

Robin Hood. Sir Knight . . . heads (*nod threateningly*)
. . . share thy purse with us (*hold out hands*) . . . friars'
lay.

(*All sing third verse of song.*) Etc., etc.

The writing exercise completed, the chorus make their way round the class-room table, upon which a large plan of the place where the play is to be taken—either hall or playground—has been traced, and there they decide upon the spots at which each will enter or go out, and the general direction of their movements whilst taking part in the scene. In this way confusion in the actual play is checked, haphazard movements from place to place avoided, and collisions prevented. Afterward, to finish up the morning, if a few minutes remain, the members of the chorus take their note-books and go out to practise their movements where the play is to be acted.

Upon returning to school in the afternoon we find those children who have been chosen to deal with the scenic effects busy spreading grass and moss over two low forms placed in one corner of the hall and designed to represent the 'mossy bank,' or putting leafy branches round the walls to sug-

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gest the tangled undergrowth bordering the glade. Leaves strewn over the floor mark the confines of the track along which the Knight and the Woodland Friar will pass, and placed in readiness is a target, which will later be erected outside the hall, so that the archers may shoot at it without the effect of the shots being observed beyond the stage directions given in the books. For it follows that an enormous amount of training would be necessary before the children could 'hit' or 'miss' at will with the primitive weapons they have made, without taking into account the fact that no room would be long enough to enclose an archers' trial ground. On the other hand, the action of the play depends upon the excellent or indifferent shooting of Robin Hood and his fellow-outlaws, and therefore such an expedient must be used to meet the case.

The registers marked, we are ready for the actual rendering of the play. The 'property masters'—two children chosen because of their tidy habits—distribute fitting weapons from the school stock to those who have been unable to furnish such for themselves; the 'stage managers'—a boy and a girl who have a certain amount of authority with the rest—marshal the chorus at their respective stations, and, when the momentary bustle has died down, the principals, who have been dressing in the cloak-rooms, are ready to enter.

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Accordingly the play begins.

It is a fixed rule that each child is free to criticize his or her fellow-actors at stated intervals, provided that the point noticed is worthy of consideration, and as the action of our little forest comedy can take but one course, I propose to deal with a few of the criticisms of the scholars rather than with the actual details of the play itself. By so doing I hope to show how the little faults and difficulties which arise are brushed aside, offering at the same time splendid opportunities to the teacher for supplementing former instruction or for insisting upon some point which has been imperfectly retained.

Thus when the Black Knight enters upon a horse (a chair) a chorus of disapproval rises because the steed has no reins, no trappings, and no body-armour. "These have been left off purposely," explains the Knight, "because they would hinder the freedom of my movements."

Such an excuse is fruitless, for it is urged that knights had to accommodate themselves to such difficulties. Finally it is decided that rough hobby-horses can be made which will simplify the matter, and the Black Knight proceeds.

But another pitfall is waiting. Our school is in a hunting district, and we flatter ourselves that we have more than a passable knowledge of horses and horsemanship. Therefore it is somewhat surprising

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to see the Knight dismount on the wrong side. Immediately the chorus of protest breaks out once more, and the mounting and dismounting must be repeated until performed to the satisfaction of the most exacting critic. Finally, the horse is tied to a bough—the absence of a bridle making this another matter for comment—and the wearied traveller seeks repose upon the mossy bank. In accordance with the actions which she has suggested, Bertha (the Knight) sits down and then stretches herself upon her back in an attitude of complete restfulness. Thereupon one lad notices that “She sat on her sword, sir!” and another doubts whether any knight when dressed in armour would be able to assume such a position with ease. The harassed warrior is forced to confess that the thought had not occurred to ‘him,’ and rearranges ‘his’ posture accordingly.

Then an inquiry is made whether the Black Knight ought not to remove his helmet when at rest, a question which meets with the prompt response that such an action would disclose his identity and so spoil the play.

Some amusement is caused when Grace, as Friar Tuck, seats herself to sing the “Outlaw’s Song,” and, thinking more of her words than her actions, takes up her position by the horse’s feet. The laugh which follows is sufficient to show her that she has

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made some mistake, and looking round she observes her error, blushes furiously, rises quickly, and retires to some less dangerous spot.

Two points of faulty enunciation are next detected, for the Knight slurs the 't' in the phrase "honest English justice" and has to repeat the words five times before we are satisfied, while Tuck lays stress on the wrong word in the sentence, "There is little of that to be found." It is pointed out that 'that' refers to 'honest English justice,' and is therefore the most important link in the sentence to couple up its meaning with the words which had been spoken immediately before.

Robin Hood's entrance leads to a heated discussion, for when he breaks through the undergrowth at one side of the Knight it is urged that a Crusader used to surprises and sudden sallies would have time to prepare himself against attack, if attack were threatened. The outlaw, however, claims that the Black Knight and Tuck are so busy talking that they would not see him until he was upon them, and, moreover, if Tuck saw him he would not warn the Knight.

"What about the noise you would make coming through the bushes?" asks one.

"I was behind a tree," is the ready answer.

But the rest are not satisfied. They declare that Robin Hood should enter after the Knight has

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passed the outlaw's hiding-place, and then he should step forward to take the horse suddenly by the (absent) bridle.

Hugh is not to be disposed of so easily, however, for he suggests that a Crusader so ready to meet attack would be prepared for an assault in the rear. But his argument fails, for his most persistent critic remarks that the grass would deaden the sound of approaching footsteps.

Seeing the justice of this retort, Robin Hood asks permission to make his entrance once more, and his second attempt meets with general approval.

The next speeches are allowed to pass unquestioned, and now the principals are eager to score off the chorus, if such a thing is possible. Woe betide the luckless 'super' who blunders in his task! And it happens!

Thirsting to appear upon the scene when Robin Hood claps his hand, the main body of the outlaws enter *together*.

Robin Hood turns to the teacher and, in a pained voice, says, "Surely the outlaws should enter in twos and threes, not in a mass!" The Knight also is not disposed to lose the chance of criticism, and so 'he' exclaims, "I don't think they should come in hurriedly either; they ought to stroll in quietly and show me how easily I have been trapped."

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The teacher is forced to agree with these remarks, and therefore the outlaws enter once again in accordance with their fresh instructions. But now they crowd too closely upon the horse, a mistake which Tuck observes with great glee, whilst the Knight causes his 'steed' to plunge and scatters the offenders in all directions.

And so questions and answers, arguments, debates, and discussions follow one another in perfect good humour, keeping the whole of the scholars brisk and alert from the first moment of the play until the last words are spoken, when a happy group of children pass out into the playground to begin their wordy rivalries anew.

There I will leave them to make my final appeal for a method which has kept body and brain of each and every one in healthy activity throughout a happy hour.

CHAPTER VII

CHILDREN'S PLAYS

A FITTING end to this book seems to be the actual work of children who have learned their history upon the lines which I have endeavoured to explain, and so I submit the two following plays, which are the unaided result of home research and school instruction.

THE COMING OF ST AUGUSTINE

A PLAY BY CONNIE RANCE (AGED 13)

CHARACTERS

POPE GREGORY.	ETHELBERT, <i>King of Kent.</i>
A MONK.	BERTHA, <i>his Christian wife.</i>
A SLAVE-DEALER.	ST AUGUSTINE, <i>a missionary.</i>
TWO ENGLISH SLAVES.	

Courtiers, slave-dealers, etc.

SCENE I. *The Slave-market at Rome.*

Groups of slaves standing together, with slave-dealers walking about before them. People walking to and fro. Two white slaves in the middle at the back.

Enter Pope Gregory and a Monk, talking together.

Pope Gregory. It is such a pity that there are so many heathens in the world.

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Monk. Yes, it is ! I only wish that I could go and convert them all. See what a lot of missionaries there are who have gone out to try and make them Christians, and have been killed. If only the whole world could see the good of a peaceful Christian life, there would not be slaves as there are now.

Pope Greg. (*pointing to the two slaves in the middle*). Who are those little white boys over there in the slave-market ?

Monk. Let us go and see.

[*They walk together to the boys.*]

Pope Greg. Who are you, and where do you come from ?

[*The boys do not understand ; they shake their heads.*]

Monk. They do not understand us ; let us ask the slave-dealer.

Pope Greg. Who are these boys, and where do they come from ? We questioned them, but they shook their heads as if they did not understand.

Slave-dealer (*coming toward Pope Gregory, and speaking to the children in their own tongue*). Who are you, and where do you come from ?

Boys. We are Angles who have come from a land called Angleland.

Slave-dealer (*turning to Pope Gregory*). They say they are from Angleland.

Pope Greg. And how did they manage to get here ?

Slave-dealer (*turns to boys, again speaking their tongue*). How did you get here ?

Boys. We were taken prisoners in a fight between two tribes, and so we were sold to some merchants as slaves.

Slave-dealer (*to Pope Gregory*). They say they were captured after a battle.

Pope Greg. They must be a fighting nation, and so they must be heathens.

CHILDREN'S PLAYS

Monk (to Slave-dealer). Ask them how they worship.

Slave-dealer. What is the god you worship?

Boys. We worship Thor and Woden.

Pope Greg. (turning to the Monk). Poor children !
They are surely angels, and not Angles. They are so pretty,
I think that I must buy them. I will send Augustine over
to their land, and see what I can do for them.

Monk. It will be a great benefit if he can manage to make
them understand that living a good Christian life is better
than quarrelling and fighting.

*[They go out together, followed by the two boys, the
people all turning to look after them.]*

SCENE II. *The Court of Ethelbert.*

*Ethelbert, with sword by his side, seated by Bertha. Soldiers
and ladies, dressed in the manner of the English, walking
about. Ethelbert and Bertha are talking together.*

Ethelbert. Who is this strange man that I hear about who
has landed, and is trying to teach a new faith?

Bertha. I, too, have heard a lot about him, and from
what I can make out he must be a priest teaching about the
Christ.

Ethel. Teaching about the Christ? Have we not enough
gods now?

Ber. Yes, but these gods are nothing but wood and stone ;
but if you will listen to this priest he will tell you about the
true God of peace.

Ethel. (standing up). Peace ! Why, my men would laugh
at him. We do not want peace ; we are quite content with
fighting. *[Ethelbert turns away.]*

Ber. (standing up and going after him). Will you give him
permission to preach the true faith?

HARRAP'S DRAMATIC HISTORY

Ethel. (laughing). He can certainly preach the true faith, as you call it, but I don't think he will get many to believe in him.

Ber. May I send a messenger to ask him to come here ?

Ethel. (walking away). You may do so.

Ber. (calling a messenger). Go to the wandering priest, and tell him that the King Ethelbert wishes him to come to him and tell him about the faith which he is preaching.

[Messenger runs out. Bertha calls her ladies to her, and they go away together.]

SCENE III. *The Camp of Ethelbert.*

Ethelbert and Bertha seated together in the middle. Soldiers and ladies seated, lying, or standing round the king and queen, talking among themselves. St Augustine comes in, followed by monks carrying a cross. Everybody looks toward them.

St Augustine (coming forward with the cross). I have come to Angleland by Pope Gregory's orders, whose wish it was that you should know about the Christian's faith and how Christ died for us. You content yourself with fighting, while you might be living in peace and happiness.

Ethel. We could not live without fighting.

St Aug. You could live far better if you did not fight.

Ber. (turning to Ethelbert). Yes, that is true.

Noble. Whatever is that peculiar thing which you have there ?

St Aug. That is a cross like that on which the Saviour died.

Noble. A cross ! I have never seen one of those before.

St Aug. Yes, you have ! Just look at your sword, which

CHILDREN'S PLAYS

you do so much fighting with, and you will see that there is one on it which serves as a handle. [Noble looks at sword.

Noble. So there is ! But this sword is not for peace.

St Aug. (*taking the sword*). You should never use it except you are fighting for what is right.

Ethel. (*standing up and talking to his people*). I think there is something in this strange doctrine after all. (*Walking to St Augustine*) I will allow you to stay here and tell us more about it, for I think that worshipping one God is better than worshipping two or three gods, and that living in peace is better than always fighting.

Ber. It will be better for the women and children.

St Aug. I thank you, lady !

[*Bertha rises and walks to St Augustine, and kneels at his feet. He lays his hand on her head in blessing. Monks and people go together and talk to one another, while the king, queen, and St Augustine go out together.*

THE DEATH OF NELSON

BY WILFRED PURVIS (AGED 12 ; SHENLEY COUNCIL SCHOOL)

SCENE I. *The "Victory's" Quarterdeck.*

CHARACTERS

LORD NELSON, *Admiral of the Fleet.*

CAPTAIN HARDY, *Captain of the "Victory."*

1ST and 2ND OFFICERS, *Officers of the "Victory."*

MIDSHIPMAN, *a Middy on the "Victory."*

1ST and 2ND SAILORS, *Sailors on the "Victory."*

Nelson and Hardy are pacing the deck, talking together. 1st and 2nd Officers are standing in the left corner, talking,

HARRAP'S DRAMATIC HISTORY

and watching the battle. The rattle of musket-fire, the din of the big guns, and the shouts and groans of men can be heard. Enter Middy hurriedly from R.

Middy (saluting). My lord, my lord.

Nelson (looking up). What do you want, my lad?

Middy. My lord, one of the French ships lies straight ahead, blocking our path. The master gunner awaits your orders.

Nelson. What is the vessel's name?

Middy. The look-out man says it is Lucas' *Redoubtable*.

Nelson (aside). Ah! So, Lucas, you mean to stop me. It will take a better craft than yours to do that. (*Loudly.*) Boy, tell the master gunner to keep back his gun-fire till we get at close quarters, then—blow her to pieces. Go.

Middy. Aye, aye, sir. [*Salutes, and exit.*]

Hardy. See, they have filled their topmasts with men. I fear that those medals you wear will make you a mark that every man among them will aim at.

Nelson (impatiently). Pah! what is there to fear? Have I not been in many a battle before? I have escaped alive these many times, and, with the grace of God, I will remain alive through many more. Come, my Hardy, throw off these foolish dreads. Fear not for me. Look to yourself. You are captain of this, my flagship, not to be my nursemaid, but to receive and give orders, and to fight. Come, Hardy, I have many things to say to you.

1st O. (hurrying up). The sharpshooters in the rigging begin to fire. Get under shelter, my lord.

[*Nelson looks up coolly, then suddenly staggers and falls.*]

Hardy drops on his knees beside him.

Hardy. My lord, my lord, are you hurt?

[*1st and 2nd Officers hurry up.*]

Nelson (feebly). I think they have done for me, Hardy.

CHILDREN'S PLAYS

Hardy. I pray to Heaven it is not so.

Nelson. I think they have, Hardy. I feel very weak. They have shot me through the spine. All is up now, Hardy.

Hardy (to 2nd Officer). Call up a couple of men to carry my lord below.

2nd O. (saluting). Aye, aye, sir.

[He runs off, and returns with two sailors.]

Hardy. Carry the Admiral down below. Bear him gently, for *(aside)* much I fear his wound is deep.

[They lift Nelson up carefully, and prepare to carry him out. Hardy walks over to the other officers.]

Nelson (to 1st sailor, pointing aft). I see the tiller ropes have not yet been replaced. See to it they are done.

1st S. Aye, aye, sir.

Nelson. Do not let the crew see that I am wounded, I command you. *(He covers his face and breast with a handkerchief.)* Take me to the cockpit.

2nd S. My lord, to the cockpit?

Nelson. Obey, my lad, not question!

[They carry him out.]

SCENE II. *The "Victory's" Cockpit.*

CHARACTERS

LORD NELSON.

MR BEATTY, *the Surgeon.*

1ST and 2ND ASSISTANTS, *Surgeon's Assistants.*

1ST and 2ND SAILORS.

3RD and 4TH SAILORS, *two of the wounded men.*

Wounded and dying.

The wounded and dying lie about, with the Surgeon and 1st and 2nd Assistants hard at work among them. As the

HARRAP'S DRAMATIC HISTORY

two sailors, carrying Nelson, enter, some of the wounded look up curiously at the form, the face and breast of which are covered by a handkerchief. The place is full of groans.

1st S. (stopping). Here's a place to lay him down.

2nd S. All right, let him down.

[They set him down, and prop up his head with a coat.

1st S. Not much of a place in which to put a man like him.

2nd S. No. But these were our orders, and we'll stick to them.

1st S. There's not much room just here. Move him along a bit.

2nd S. That'll be all right. There's as much as he wants.

1st S. But he's not like a common sailor-man.

2nd S. He'll be all right. We'll have work enough outside. *[They turn away in the direction of the Surgeon.*

1st S. (whispering to the Surgeon). Go at once to that man over there with the kerchief over his face. He's more important than any of these you are looking at.

[1st and 2nd Sailors go out as Nelson's handkerchief falls off, disclosing his medals and epaulettes.

3rd S. (lifting himself up with difficulty). The Admiral! He's wounded. Mr Beatty! Mr Beatty!

4th S. My Lord Nelson is wounded.

[All sailors attempt to rise and stare in the direction of Nelson.

Surgeon (hurrying forward). Nelson? My Lord Nelson? *(The Assistants run up.)* The Admiral cannot stop here. *(To the Assistants.)* Now, you two, do not stand there gaping. Think, men. Nelson's life depends on us. Quick, one minute may make all the difference.

[The Assistants lift Nelson up carefully, and carry him out, followed by the Surgeon. The wounded men sit up, and talk excitedly amongst themselves.

CHILDREN'S PLAYS

SCENE III. *A Midshipman's Berth.*

CHARACTERS

LORD NELSON.

MR BEATTY.

CAPTAIN HARDY.

1ST ASSISTANT.

Nelson is lying in a bed. The Surgeon is standing by the side of the bed nearest the door, while 1st Assistant stands at attention at the foot.

Nelson (rolling impatiently to and fro). Hardy, Hardy. Bring me Hardy. (*Pause . . .*) Hardy, Hardy. I want Hardy. Bring him to me. (*Pause . . .*)

Enter Hardy. Nelson turns.

Nelson (sternly). How is it that you have not come before. I have sent for you three times, but always the answer came that you were needed on deck.

Hardy. That is true. I took the first opportunity that came to visit you, for the battle rages fiercely.

Nelson (eagerly). Is the day still going well with us, Hardy?

Hardy. Yes, my lord. Already twelve of the enemy's ships are in our hands.

Nelson (propping himself up on his one arm). I trust that the "Victory" has done her share of the fighting.

Hardy. Aye, it has, and, seemingly, it will have more to do, for five of the chief ships of their van are bearing down on us, and though, having called up several of our other ships to our aid, we are in hopes of giving them a good beating, still, we will have our share of the fighting to do.

Nelson. I hope none of *our* ships have struck.

Hardy. No, there is no fear of that.

Nelson. Hardy, I am dying. It will soon be all over with me.

HARRAP'S DRAMATIC HISTORY

Hardy. Mr Beatty, is there no hope?

Surgeon. I—er——

Nelson. No. The shot has broken my spine. You know as well as I do that my case is hopeless.

Surgeon. I am sorry to say that is true.

Nelson. I feel by something rising in my breast that my time has come. *[He falls back.]*

Surgeon. Does it hurt you *very* much?

Nelson. So much that I almost wish I was dead. Yet *(quietly)* I would like to live just a little while longer.

SCENE IV. *The Midshipman's Berth.*

CHARACTERS

LORD NELSON. CAPTAIN HARDY. MR BEATTY.

Nelson is lying as before. Hardy is standing at the side of him, while Beatty is at the foot of the bed.

Hardy. The victory was complete. Some fifteen of their ships surrendered.

Nelson. Good; but I thought there would be more. *(Pause . . .)* *(Emphatically)* Anchor, Hardy, anchor. Keep the fleet together, Hardy; don't let them scatter.

Hardy. I suppose, seeing as you are in this state, that Admiral Collingwood will take charge of all the affairs.

Nelson (attempting to raise himself). Not while I am still alive. Do *you* anchor, Hardy!

Hardy. Shall the signal be given?

Nelson. Yes, for if I live, I'll anchor. Hardy, Hardy, I am going fast. In a few minutes I shall be dead; but, for the love of Heaven, don't throw me over the side, Hardy.

Hardy. No, sir.

Nelson. I have given you my orders. Kiss me, Hardy.

CHILDREN'S PLAYS

(*Hardy kisses him.*) Now I am satisfied. Thank God I have done my duty. (*Pause . . .*) (*Feebly*) Who is that?

Hardy. It is I—Captain Hardy.

Nelson. God bless you, Hardy.

[*Hardy walks out slowly and sorrowfully.* *Pause. . . .*

Nelson. Drink, drink, give me drink. Drink, Hardy, drink, give me drink.

[*He attempts to raise himself, then falls back.* *Pause. . . .*

Nelson (*opening his eyes*). Thank God I have done my duty.

COSTUMES

Lord Nelson. Cocked hat, tail-coat, knee-breeches, white stockings, shoes, eye-shade, medals.

Captain Hardy. Cocked hat, tail-coat, knee-breeches, white stockings, shoes.

1st Officer. Same as Hardy.

2nd Officer. Same as 1st Officer.

Midshipman. Straw hat, short coat, long trousers, shoes.

Mr Beatty. Long-sleeved waistcoat, knee-breeches, white stockings, shoes.

1st Assistant. Straw hat and pigtail, loose white shirt, long trousers.

2nd Assistant. Same as 1st Assistant.

Sailors. Same as 2nd Assistant.

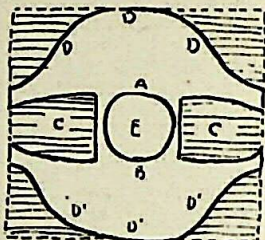
A sound like musket-fire can be made by tapping rulers on desk; big guns by raising flaps of desk and dropping them again.

SUGGESTIONS FOR MAKING COSTUMES

Cocked Hat. Cut the cloth to the shape shown in the diagram, and, after stiffening with brown paper, fold up

HARRAP'S DRAMATIC HISTORY

at A and B, placing pieces of cardboard at C and C. Then sew D D D and D' D' D' neatly together. E is the aperture



to be cut for the head. With a little adaptation quite a smart cocked hat can be made on this plan.

Tail-coat. An old 'swallow-tail' or morning coat, the buttons covered with silver paper, together with epaulettes and gold lace made from gilt paper, provides a very good tail-coat.

Short Coat. An ordinary loose jacket, with gilt paper for gold lace and epaulettes.

Long-sleeved Waistcoat. If a light-coloured waistcoat can be got, this, and a shirt of the same colour being worn underneath, makes a good 'long-sleeved' waistcoat.

Shirt. Loose white cricket shirt.

Knee-breeches. These can be easily made out of calico, after the pattern of ordinary knickerbockers, which button at the knee.

Long Trousers. Long white cricket trousers.

White Stockings. The white stockings which many girls possess should be worn instead of the ordinary black ones.

Shoes. Hard black leather shoes, with buckles of beaten tin, or those off slippers, will complete the costumes.

The cartridge belt for the Middy can be made out of a strip of calico.

The sailor's hat can be an ordinary 'straw.'

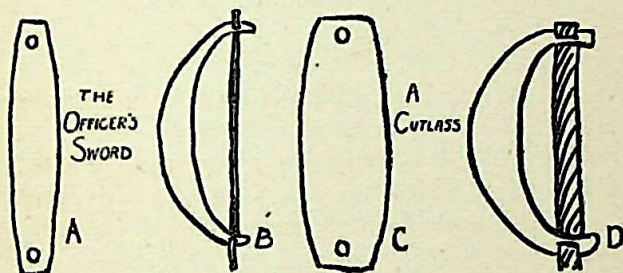
CHILDREN'S PLAYS

The pigtail can be made of rope, which is pinned on to the inside of the hat.

To make the appearance of having only one arm, the person acting the part of Nelson should have his arm pushed down his trouser leg.

Nelson should have a small brown paper shade to his eye.

Swords can be made with garden canes, with handles cut from tin. See A and B.



Cutlasses can be made from laths, with similar but broader handles. See C and D.

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